

Strange calm in Kabul

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT IN KABUL

After a year of bombardment that has shattered whole sections of the Afghan capital, Kabul, there are signs of peace in the city. The guns have gone quiet and the auguries of peace are appearing: UN officials and foreign diplomats, most of whom sensibly kept away from the city during the dangerous times, are arriving in flocks.

Yet although there is calm, there is no settlement between Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, the "prime minister" appointed in March as part of an agreement designed to bring peace, and the then defence minister, Ahmad Shah Masoud. Mr Hikmatyar is still unable to enter Kabul and has, in his frustration, bombarded the city with artillery. But for the past four months, he has held his fire and Kabul has enjoyed its longest period of calm since the mujaheddin took over the government in April 1992. Why?

Mr Hikmatyar may fear that a new bombardment could turn out to be his downfall. It could provoke an attack on his forces by Abdul Rashid Dostam, a general in the former communist regime and these days one of Afghanistan's more formidable warlords.

Mr Dostam has alternately backed Mr Hikmatyar and his main rival, the defence minister, Ahmad Shah Masoud. Mr Dostam and Mr Masoud are now partners once more. Diplomats in Kabul say Mr Dostam is ready to fight the Hikmatyar forces again, on condition that this time he will be allowed to finish them off.

Mr Hikmatyar's advantages are his apparently unflagging support from Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence Agency and his good supply lines between Pakistan and Charasayab, his headquarters an hour's drive from Kabul. Pakistan helped to arrange the accord under which Mr Hikmatyar became prime minister and Mr Masoud formally surrendered his defence title to the president, Burhanuddin Rabbani. But the reality is that Mr Masoud, although titleless, still controls the government forces of some 20,000 men who patrol the capital's streets.

In Afghanistan as a whole, Mr Hikmatyar relies heavily for manpower on the Pashtun tribes, the country's traditional rulers. He is strongest in three eastern Pashtun provinces, Laghman, Nangarhar and Kunar. But Mr Masoud's and Mr Rabbani's followers dominate more of Afghanistan than any other group. This includes much of the north and five western provinces centred on Herat. Even some of the Pashtun commanders are with him.

Kabulis are enjoying their season of peace. Food is arriving from the north along roads made safe by Mr Masoud's men. United Nations lorries bring in medicine and other supplies from Pakistan. People promenade the streets once more, and girl-watching is back. Kabul, a city with a con-



Hikmatyar pauses

fusing recent past, is still somewhere between communism and Islam. Thus, while modesty is encouraged, veils are not compulsory, and most women make do with a flimsy headscarf over their hair.

THE ECONOMIST SEPTEMBER 18TH 1993

The way north

FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN KUNDUZ

THE town of Kunduz is in some ways a model of what Islamic Afghanistan could be. It is about 300km (186 miles) from Kabul, a decent distance from the squabbling factions who have destroyed much of the capital. In contrast to Kabul, the tranquillity of Kunduz is almost as overpowering as the dust raised by passing traffic in the dirt streets. The local governor and the local army chief, from different parties, get on well enough. Improving the roads is their big scheme at the moment. To pay for the work and materials they are taxing passing traffic.

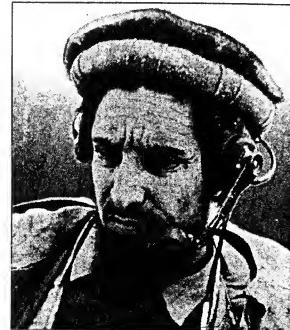
If they have a grievance it is that the United Nations is refusing to assist the 40,000 or so refugees living in and around Kunduz. The refugees are Tajiks from over the border in Tajikistan. Although Tajikistan is no longer a Soviet state, its government in Dushanbe is run by former communists who have made war on what they say are Islamic rebels. The UN stopped helping the Tajik refugees in February, claiming that its workers had been threatened by Arabs working for Islamic charities.

"Slander, absolutely untrue," says the Kunduz governor, Qari Rahmatullah. "There are only a handful of Arabs. They are doctors, administrators and so forth, not armed mujahideen." Mr Rahmatullah believes the UN cut off aid under pressure from the Dushanbe government, to force the refugees to return. A Red Cross field worker, who asked for his name not to be

revealed, said the governor's version was probably true. The Dushanbe government is worried that the Tajik refugee enclave in northern Afghanistan might become a base for an Islamic insurrection. The Russian border forces, which help to prop up the Dushanbe regime, have continued to shell Afghan border towns where they suspect rebels are hiding.

For all its problems, Kunduz, the town and the province, is making the best of the peace that has come to Afghanistan after years of war fighting the Russians. The same mood prevails in the neighbouring provinces: Parwan, Kapisa, Takhar and Badakhshan. They accept the national presidency of Burhanuddin Rabbani and the authority of his powerful disciple, Ahmad Shah Masoud. Much of the region was under Mr Masoud's military control in the years before the fall of the communist regime. Even so, he allows the local warlords their local sway. A visitor to Foyzabad, the capital of Badakhshan, would be well advised to take tea with and pay respects to the local chieftain before seeking out the governor.

The economy, as everywhere in Afghanistan, is based on agriculture. Vast wheatfields extend across Takhar and Kunduz; Kapisa and Parwan produce fruit and nuts. In the upper reaches of Badakhshan, the Afghans find it hard just to feed themselves. In the poor soil farmers grow poppies. The opium will probably be sold in Pakistan or the countries of the former Soviet Union. But opium apart, a farmer at



Masoud the peacemaker

the village of Rubat defends his crop: "It yields fodder, the seeds can be eaten and they yield oil. The ashes of the stalks after harvest make good soap, and growing poppy makes the land better for wheat next year."

The authorities refuse to stop farmers growing it. They say they could not enforce a ban, but probably they do not want to. This is Afghanistan, doing its best to live in peace.

THE ECONOMIST OCTOBER 2ND 1993

TAJIK AND RUSSIAN OFFICIALS VISIT KABUL

LETTER DATED 27 OCTOBER 1993 FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TAJIKISTAN ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Afghanistan and Tajikistan agreed to sign a friendship treaty as steps are being taken to repatriate prisoners of war both from recent fighting as well as from the former Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.

Four Russian soldiers and a Kazakh officer captured last month by Tajik mujahideen and later transferred to Afghanistan were turned over to Tajik President Emomali Rakhmanov during his recent visit to Kabul which ended on Aug. 31.

On Sept. 8 Afghan Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar told visiting Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev that he was ready to release all Russian prisoners of war captured during the 1979-1989 Soviet occupation of the country.

Both Kozyrev and Hekmatyar, leader of the Hezb al-Islami which has been holding about 40 prisoners of war since the Soviet occupation, told reporters they hoped to see an improvement in ties.

Moscow says 309 troops are missing from the war in Afghanistan — however some were killed, and others have converted to Islam and refused to return.

Kozyrev said Russia would send teams of engineers to join an operation to remove millions of landmines scattered across Afghanistan by Soviet troops and their Afghan allies during 14 years of the Afghan war.

The two said that the clashes along the border with Tajikistan were a major topic in their discussions.

The UN is currently making efforts to repatriate tens of thousands of Tajik refugees who have fled to Afghanistan in fighting this past year. To pressure the Tajiks into returning, the UN closed a large refugee camp in Mazar-i-Sharif. A UN official said that a joint team with representatives from Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and the United Nations would coordinate the return of the Tajik refugees.

I should like to inform you that, in accordance with the relevant decisions of the Security Council of the United Nations, the leaders of the Republic of Tajikistan are taking all the necessary measures to normalize the situation in the country.

However, efforts to stabilize the situation in Tajikistan are being hindered by continued tension along the Tajik-Afghan border. In the adjacent territory of Afghanistan, foreign instructors are training armed bands, which carry out regular armed incursions into Tajikistan. There have been human casualties. The humanitarian situation also remains critical.

The Government of Tajikistan is convinced that the continued tension on the Tajik-Afghan border is a serious threat to regional and international peace and security and requires the Security Council's close attention. We appreciate the efforts of the Afghan authorities to improve the situation on the border with Tajikistan, which includes measures to halt violations of the border from Afghan territory. At the same time and in the light of the present circumstances, we consider it extremely important for the Security Council to urge all interested parties to refrain from any actions that might lead to a further escalation of the conflict and, in particular, to refrain from training armed opposition formations in the territory of the other State.

The Government of Tajikistan has repeatedly expressed its readiness to cooperate with all social forces of the country with a view to achieving civil harmony and a comprehensive political solution to the conflict. We should be grateful if the Security Council supported our call for dialogue with a view to securing national and civil peace.

The establishment in Tajik territory of coalition peace-keeping forces from five States members of the Commonwealth of Independent States was an important step in the de-escalation of the conflict. The Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan, which established these forces, consider them to be a regional arrangement in keeping with the principles of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. The Security Council should take note of this important fact and express its support for close cooperation between the United Nations and the regional efforts being made within the framework of the Commonwealth to achieve a comprehensive political solution.

The Government of Tajikistan welcomes the interest the Secretary-General of the United Nations has taken in both sides' requests for United Nations assistance in the efforts already in progress. It highly appreciates the efforts of the Secretary-General's Special Envoy, Ambassador Ismat Kittani, and also the unit of United Nations officers in Dushanbe. We should be grateful if the Special Envoy and of the unit of United Nations officers in Tajikistan could be extended for an additional period beyond its expiration date of 31 October 1993.

The Government and people of Tajikistan are grateful to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Food Programme, the International Committee of the Red Cross and other agencies involved in humanitarian work for their useful efforts, and hope that they will continue their efforts in future.

The Government of Tajikistan also sincerely appreciates the willingness of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe to assist in the achievement of national harmony and the creation of democratic institutions in Tajikistan. We hope that the noble efforts of the United Nations, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States will complement each other in a harmonious manner.

We request that the Security Council continue to monitor closely developments in Tajikistan and on its border with Afghanistan and continue to use the means at its disposal to contribute to a political solution.

I should like to request that you convene a meeting of the Security Council to consider this request and adopt an appropriate resolution.

(Signed) Emomali RAKHMONOV
Head of State
Chairman of the Supreme Council
of the Republic of Tajikistan

UNITED
NATIONS



Sep. 10, 1993

TARGET AMERICA & THE WEST

by
Yossef Bodansky



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The author is the Director of the Republican Task Force on Terrorism & Unconventional Warfare of the US Congress. The book was published in 1993.

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Afghanistan would be Tehran's primary avenue into the Muslim community in the U.S. and Canada. The Iranians would rely on a mix of Afghan Islamists, Iranians masquerading as Afghans, and Arab 'Afghans' for smuggling into the U.S. and Canada Sunni *mullahs* and *ulama* and expert terrorists in order to transform and agitate the local communities, introduce the spirit of *Jihad*, and, ultimately, establish and manage networks. In the U.S. and Canada, these operatives would be absorbed and sheltered by the existing Islamist networks checked and solidified by Ayatollah Nassiri.

By then, largely due to the work of Abbas Zamani, Iran's ambassador to Pakistan, Afghan-Iranian cooperation in fighting the *Jihad* had been expanded into the integration of Afghan *mujahideen* into the fold of Islamic *Jihad* and *HizbAllah* networks in the U.S. and Canada. Because of widespread support for the Afghan resistance, *mujahideen* were accepted and supported in Western countries in places their Iranian counterparts could not reach. Therefore, Afghans became the key to the establishment of new terrorist networks.

Ostensibly, Afghan "refugees and emigres" who resettled in the U.S. and Canada organized and assumed command over new cells and networks of the *HizbAllah* under the guise of solidarity committees with the *Jihad* in Afghanistan. Thus, even as Iran's involvement in and support for international terrorism became known, the *Hizbollahi* were still able to travel to the West through Pakistan, using the makeshift travel documents of the Afghan refugees and resistance fighters.

Back in 1983, the cooperation between the Afghans and the Iranians reached new heights when Abbas Zamani became the Iranian ambassador to Islamabad. As Abu-Sharief, Zamani was involved in overseas operations for *al-Fatah*, Black September, and other Palestinian organizations during the 1970s. He was one of the first and most ardent advocates of exporting the Islamic Revolution. Toward that end he supervised PLO support for the organization of the *Pasdaran*. All this time Zamani was a senior KGB operative. He would be quietly

recalled in 1986 after his role in Afghan-Pakistani Islamist terrorism was exposed. But while in Islamabad, Zamani coordinated the transfer of funds, weapons and trainees between Iran and the camps in Pakistan.¹⁴²

In 1984, on the instructions of Mirhashem, Zamani approached the Afghan resistance leader Gulbaddin Hekmatyar and asked for his help. The Iranians wanted to use some of the Afghan *mujahideen* with combat experience in both Afghanistan and the Iraqi front as instructors for the terrorist brigade (see Chapter 2). They also wanted to deploy some of the Iranian terrorists in the ranks of *Hizb-i Islami* and *JundAllah* so that they could acquire combat experience in irregular warfare and as urban guerrillas. Hekmatyar agreed to both requests and their implementation started within a short time. Soon afterwards, Afghans volunteered, and in some cases were invited, to join *HizbAllah* and the Iranian subunits. Since their experience and expertise were invaluable to the Iranians, and their commitment to Islam was beyond reproach, they were accepted even though they were Sunni.¹⁴³

At first, Tehran and Hekmatyar reached an agreement on Iranian assistance to establish an Islamic Republic in Afghanistan. In return, Iranian intelligence operatives and terrorists would be included in the *Hizb-i Islami* missions in Arab and Muslim countries and especially the Persian Gulf countries.¹⁴⁴ These countries are "the first tier" priorities of the Iranian terrorist brigade.¹⁴⁵

Concurrently, since mid-1985, Iran was increasing its specialized terrorist training program for foreigners prepared for high-risk operations overseas. Among the first to receive this training was a group of Afghan *mujahideen* in the Mashhad area who were transferred to a camp in the Quchan district and given intensive terrorist and clandestine training under the command of Mohammad Ali Kohladvuz. Some of these Afghans were prepared for terrorist operations in the U.S.¹⁴⁶

In late June or early July 1987, following the success of their initial arrangements, Gulbaddin Hekmatyar signed an agreement with Iran whereby Tehran would increase its help to his *Hizb-i-Islami* group, and in return Iranians would be infiltrated into the West, especially the United States and Canada, using documents provided by the *Hizb-i-Islami*. In view of the close relations that Pakistan's ISI had with Gulbaddin Hekmatyar and the tight control they exercised over him and his forces, it is inconceivable that such strategic arrangements could have been reached without Islamabad's blessing and approval, let alone intimate knowledge.¹⁴⁷

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Pp. 333-335

142. Taheri, op cit. (*Holy Terror*), pp. 166-167; *Early Warning*, November 1987; Mutant J., *Arms and Insecurity in the Persian Gulf*, New Delhi, Radian, 1984, p. 158; Segev S., *The Iranian Connection*, Jerusalem, Donino, 1989, p. 122; The Material provided by Iranian sources in Europe and Afghan resistance sources.

143. Material provided by Afghan resistance, Pakistani, and Iranian sources

144. Lashkul V., *Izvestiya*, 1 June 1987; Material provided by Afghan sources

145. *Creation of an Independent Brigade for Carrying out Unconventional Warfare in Enemy Territory*, Minutes of a Top Secret meeting in Tehran on 26 May 1984

146. Radio Najai-e Iran, 7 October 1985; Material provided by Afghan sources

147. Material provided by Iranian and Afghan resistance sources; Taheri, op cit. (*Holy Terror*), pp. 166-167, *Early Warning*, November 1987

THE AFGHAN CONNECTION

AFGHANISTAN WAS A POWERFUL CATALYST IN ACTIVATING FUNDAMENTALIST Muslim youth, inspiring if not actually training many militants. During the 1980s, thousands of volunteers from 50 countries rallied to the rebel *mujahedin*. Most of them worked for relief organizations or in hospitals and schools. A few thousand actually went into the field to fight. Some returned home to cause serious trouble for their rulers. Several of those arrested in the World Trade Center bombing were veterans of the Afghan campaign. The now imprisoned Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman made at least three trips to Afghanistan during the war, and two of his sons reportedly fought there. But there is no hard evidence on how many volunteers there were.

In Egypt Mubarak calls the so-called Afghani veterans the main terrorist threat to the stability of his government. One of the two assailants killed in the attempt last month on the life of Interior Minister Hassan al-Alfi was veteran of the Afghan war, as were others implicated in previous attacks on government officials. Montasser al-Zayat, a Cairo lawyer who represents many of the militants arrested in the past two years, claims that 20,000 Egyptians fought alongside the *mujahedin*. The government's experts put the figure closer to 2,500 and say that as many as half of them have returned home. A senior Western diplomat in Cairo insists that both estimates are too high. He says 2,500 Arabs went to Afghanistan and that only about 200 Egyptians received combat training and returned to fight their government. Even so, says the diplomat, "it only takes a few to create the myth." In Algeria several hundred Arab veterans, known locally as "el-Afghanis," are fighting in the ranks of the Islamic Salvation Front. In Tunisia returnees from the battles against the Soviet army are supporting An-Nahda.

During the war in Afghanistan, two main organizations provided a pipeline for volunteers, funding and relief workers. One was the Muslim Brotherhood, founded in Egypt in 1928, and the other was the World Muslim League, supported by Saudi Arabia. Linked to them were smaller groups of activists and influential individuals, including charismatic recruiter Abdullah Azzam, a Jordanian-born Palestinian who brought in hundreds of zealous volunteers, and his New York-based agent, Mustafa Shalabi, who ran the Alkifar Refugee Center in Brooklyn, known as "the Jihad office." Both Azzam and Shalabi were murdered in 1991. Another key figure was Saudi financier Osama bin Laden, who fought with the *mujahedin* himself and brought many others to the cause. Arab governments under attack by extremists often claim that the returned Afghan veterans are being directed by a central office in Afghanistan and financed by Iran. Such suspicions have not been proved.



PIOUS VOLUNTEERS from Yemen fight with the *mujahedin*, 1989

solution. But nearly all of them are alienated from a political process they find remote and unresponsive. "These are societies in which all forms of opposition are repressed and no hope of bettering one's own life exists," says Bruno Etienne, an expert on Islam at the University of Aix-en-Provence. "The mosque is left as the only venue of debate, while radical Islamic ideologies are soon identified as the only viable means of instigating change."

The force of fundamentalism's appeal is its claim to answer the region's malaise and fulfill a common desire to affirm the prestige of the Arab people, who feel humiliated by colonialism and by Israel's powerful presence in their midst. In the fundamentalist view, says Zalmay Khalilzad, a former National Security Council official now at the Rand Corp., things have gone wrong in Muslim societies "because they have strayed from the righteous path, and the West was brutal and immoral and encouraged the Muslims to go astray. Only by returning to the righteous path can you achieve greatness again, and that would involve throwing out the West."

Ultimately, if the Israeli-Palestinian deal bears fruit, most experts believe fundamentalists, particularly the violent ones, will lose ground in the occupied territories. The regional economic cooperation and outside investment that will accompany the peace settlement should provide new jobs, new industries and opportunities for trade. When the economic initiatives are set in motion, the recruits for extremism are likely to decrease.

Fundamentalism, of course, is still capable of destructive, murderous troublemaking throughout the Middle East. But it has not had the power to overthrow any governments except Iran. Even in relatively traditional Muslim societies, the majorities want peace and prosperity. They put a higher value on economic growth, and increasingly on social justice and political participation, than on abstract religious definitions of purity. If that makes them secular Muslims, so be it.

—Reported
by Lisa Beyer/Jerusalem, Dean Fischer/Cairo,
Jefferson Penberthy/Peshawar and Jay Peterzell/
Washington

Did U.S. blunder in helping mujahideen?

By PAUL OVERBY

Can it be true that Islamic fundamentalist terrorism, which some call the "major threat" facing America, has a secret source? And that that source is none other than — ourselves?

By financing the Afghan guerrillas during their *jihad*, or holy war, against the Soviets, it is said the United States spawned a whole school of terrorists. What a monumental blunder!

But was what we did either so bad or so stupid? The answer is no.

Granted, part of the reason for saying that is personal: I was with the Afghans during their fight. But the facts show American responsibility was indirect.

Who decided, for instance, where the money went during the war in Afghanistan? Not the Americans, at least in my interpretation, even though it was our money. It was the Pakistanis who allocated the funds. And Pakistan strongman Zia ul-Haq for various reasons happened to like the fundamentalists.

Control of the money was the price the Pakistanis exacted for facing the risk of Soviet retaliation and for putting up with the world's largest concentration of refugees. After all, the war was being run from their territory.

Then, too, looking more closely at the fundamentalists who got U.S. money, many were (in the circumstances) fairly moderate — like people in the Jamaat-e-Islami Party. Of course the problem, as U.S. policy-makers were fully aware, lay with the fanatic wing of the fundamentalists.

But if we knew, and even if they were a minority, why did we give them the money?

The eventual reason has to be that the Afghan war was part of a larger conception — defeating the Soviet Union. Look at the sequence: First we spent \$3 billion to help the guerrillas in Afghanistan. Then both communism and the Soviet Union collapsed.

Of course, cause and effect didn't work in precisely that way — despite what the Afghans like to think — but neither was it altogether absent.

So if by supporting the fundamentalists, among whom were some, probably only a few, wild men, we could move back a thermonuclear Armageddon (nothing less than the possible end of everything) by a significant amount, was this really a bad proposition?

Sensible as this strategy might have been, the irony would still be heavy if, in the process of defusing one threat, we clearly brought another into existence.

At the time, the possibility of anyone involved in the war attacking America was not obvious. After all, we were giving them lots of assistance in the form of advice, money and deadly accurate Stinger anti-aircraft missiles.

Of course the truth was that they didn't care. Holy war was the thing; who was providing help was secondary. Here we must understand an important political fact: that for Muslims around the world, the Afghan war was tremendously popular. For the first time in a very long time, Islam was winning.

The ambitions of the Muslim world and its pride, at the bitter edge of which exist the terrorists, go very deep.

Fundamentalists existed before the war began; they were not created by it — but they did profit by it.

If some far-out Muslims attached themselves to the Afghan war, it is not surprising. I met foreigners from four countries who were fighting there.



PAUL KOLSTI

The funny thing is that the Afghans themselves are generally critical of people like the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini of Iran. Warriors that they are, attacking civilians violates their code of honor. So they are infuriated to have their war transformed into some sort of warm-up for terrorism.

While there were some bad actors involved, they were not typical, and we must distinguish between them and the majority of what we could call pragmatic fundamentalists who will work for an Islamic state in slow stages and succeed or fail without directly harming the rest of us.

All Muslims are not fundamentalists; all fundamentalists are not terrorists. We should not make enemies where there may be friends or, at worst, antagonists.

The Afghan war and the collapse of the Soviet Union proved to be a tremendous success not only for the West, but for the Muslim fundamentalists as well. Perhaps the basic message is not that different from the dinosaur movie: We can't always control what we create; ambition takes us beyond our reach.

History never ends; its ironies will not let it.

MANY MUSLIM FIGHTERS TRAINED IN AFGHAN WAR

By Anwar Faruqi
ASSOCIATED PRESS

POL-E-CHARKHI, Afghanistan
A new breed of Muslim warrior is on the march around the world, fired by religious zeal and financed by Persian Gulf oil money.

Many of the new militants, recruited from Brooklyn to Baluchistan, fought or were trained in Afghanistan during 15 years of war and anarchy.

Newly trained Arab recruits have been found fighting in Bosnia, Kashmir and Tajikistan alongside Arab veterans of the 1980-89 Afghan war against the Soviet army.

At least two men jailed in New York on charges of bombing the World Trade Center in February or plotting to blow up other targets — an Egyptian and an American — are said to have fought in Afghanistan.

About 25,000 foreign Muslims, most of them Arabs, fought in Afghanistan in the 1980s. Volunteers continued arriving, usually through neighboring Pakistan, after the Soviets left in 1989, say Pakistani intelligence sources.

Muslim rebels finally ousted the Afghan government in 1992 and are now fighting for power among themselves, providing a chaotic cover for would-be holy warriors from other parts of the world.

Some veterans remain in Afghanistan, but others have turned up during attacks on targets elsewhere, such as the Afghan-trained bomber who died Aug. 18 in an attempt to assassinate the Egyptian interior minister.

Thousands more, both in Muslim countries and in the West, either await opportunities to launch their own Islamic revolutions or are fading back into their native urban slums or rural villages.

Egypt and Saudi Arabia, which once encouraged the holy war in Afghanistan, have become alarmed at what they see as a trained army of opponents.

Sheik Omar Abdel-Rahman, the blind Egyptian cleric whose sermons attracted several of the New York bombing suspects, spent months in the Pakistani border town of Peshawar in the early 1980s.

Peshawar, only 25 miles from Afghanistan, was the headquarters of several Afghan rebel groups during the war. Many Arab volunteers, and a few Western converts to Islam, passed through it.

Ishaq, who would not give his last

name, is among those who tried to join Islam's new warriors.

The 20-year-old Arab, of Algerian descent, said he had spent his entire life in London, often listening to sermons at the Baker Street mosque.

He decided to come to Afghanistan, Ishaq said, after hearing and reading of Muslims being killed in Bosnia; in the Indian part of Kashmir, where Muslims are rebelling; and in Tajikistan, a former Soviet republic.

Ishaq was trekking across Afghanistan with 11 other Arabs when they were stopped by Afghan fighters who suspected them of helping a rival faction. They were arrested and taken to the Pol-e-Charkhi prison east of Kabul.

In the prison courtyard, littered with burned, shot-up vehicles, he and his companions sat on the ground under a hot midday sun. Some stared into the distance, while others murmured prayers.

None would speak at first, but as they were being herded back inside, Ishaq broke the silence.

"I came to fight for Islam," he said rapidly in English. "Muslims are being massacred everywhere; Tajikistan, Kashmir, Bosnia."

The young man, clutching a zippered, pocket-size Koran, said he knew little of his 11 traveling "brothers" or why they were in Afghanistan.

"Allah has said he will make this religion great above all," Ishaq said.

Neither he nor his companions, who described themselves as Algerians, Egyptians, Saudis and Yemenis, would give details of their training. But Adil, a frightened 17-year-old Afghan they had hired as a guide and interpreter, was more talkative.

Adil said he met the group in Kunjuk, a village in Logar province south of Kabul. He said they had trained "in a camp in Logar with 40 or 50 other Muslim foreigners" for about 45 days and were on their way to Jalalabad in eastern Afghanistan.

From there, Adil said, they planned to slip into Pakistan in hopes of being smuggled out to one of the wars.

"Afghanistan's present chaos and its political uncertainty create ideal conditions for all sorts of people to take refuge there," said Manzoor Ahmed, deputy home secretary of Pakistan's Northwest Frontier province. "It is difficult to stop people from going there, and it is impossible to monitor what they do once they are in."

The Washington Times
10/23

Lack of aid hindering Afghan recovery

By John Stackhouse
TORONTO GLOBE AND MAIL

HERAT, Afghanistan — When school opened this year in the western Afghan province of Herat, government officials budgeted for 10,000 students.

On the first day of class, 45,000 showed up.

Cramming children four to a desk anywhere that was cleared of land mines, teachers took their precious few notebooks and tore them into enough pieces for each student. They then collected all the pencils and broke each one into four.

In peace, as in war, Afghans cannot be accused of lacking industry. But as the country's 16.5 million people try to rebuild their lives from the destruction of 14 years of occupation and civil war, they're finding little in the way of outside support.

"I am not grateful to the international community," said Ismael Khan, Herat's governor and self-styled emir who, with plenty of outside support, fought the Soviet-backed communist government. "Why aren't they doing anything now?"

Set in a landlocked stretch of mountains, Afghanistan today is one of the poorest places in the world, with an infant mortality rate 50 percent higher than the average for sub-Saharan Africa.

Last year about 260,000 Afghan children died from malnutrition, disease and land mines, more than double the number of adults killed in the worst year of fighting.

Herat, a city of 450,000 blessed with vineyards and cotton fields, watched Soviet warplanes in the 1980s carpet-bomb 15,000 homes in its western quarter, Khoja Khala. To keep away the mujahideen — the anti-communist guerrillas — the government laid as many as 9,000 anti-personnel land mines in the city.

Now the region's economy is in tatters. Herat's largest textile mill has been stripped of its machinery. As winter approaches, the city's only large granary sits empty, and prices in the market have doubled since August. Few farmers have tools, fertilizer, seed or water.

In spite of all this, Herat is rising from its muddy ashes.

In the city's blown-out western quarter, hundreds of men can be

seen every morning carting wooden beams and slapping together mud bricks.

"I am happier here," said Mohammad Ahmed, an elderly man who returned from Iran in August with a wheelbarrow and a shovel. "This is my country."

"We're achieving a lot with very little attention," said Martin Barber, acting director of the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan. "You can see a fantastic change in Herat over the past 12 months."

Since 1991, humanitarian assistance has been, in Mr. Barber's words, "just enough." But development money has yet to appear, even as refugees pour across the border. Donors say they're reluctant to make a long-term financial commitment to a country under threat of civil war and tribal fragmentation.

"This is a dilemma," Mr. Barber said. "A place like Herat is ripe for development, and it needs it because it has to absorb this huge number of refugees."

Afghanistan was supposed to be flooded with returning refugees this year, but because of continued fighting and looting in parts of the country only a fraction of those expected crossed the border.

The 410,000 who did return, following 1.5 million in 1992, have come home to a loose collection of emirates and fiefdoms held together only in name by an ineffectual central government in Kabul.

In the northern province of Mazar-i-Sharif, Gen. Rashid Dostum, who was a commander for the ousted communist government, has built a semiautonomous region where there are more foreign missions than in Kabul.

In Herat, Mr. Khan has a small air force and 50,000 soldiers, each with a crisp khaki uniform and a monthly salary of \$6 plus rations.

While sporadic fighting continues in Kabul among religious and ethnic factions, in the provinces the biggest threat to stability is civilian pressure.

In Herat, 1,500 new arrivals every day fill a crowded refugee transit center in the middle of the city. Accustomed to handsome Iranian con-

Continued on p. 35



LETTER FROM KABUL & KANDAHAR, September 1993



On the road to Kabul checkpoints or bahkair are as common as on the way into Jalalabad. Our flying coach driver got in a sudden argument with one of the guards at such a post. When the guard took his Kalashnikov off safety with an ominous snap, everyone in the bus tensed; but nothing happened, and some passengers loudly jeered the driver as we pulled away.

Some posts fly the new government flag which has horizontal bars of green, white and black (occasionally upside down or sideways), but many show the green flag of Hezb Hekmatyar, though green was also used by, I believe, Ittihad. There are also white flags and black flags, which apparently represent the parties of Junbish (Dostam) or Wahadat (Shia-Hazara), as well as (particularly in Kandahar) the old flag of red, black and green which is favored by NIFA of Gailani.

Scattered through the Kabul River gorge are the rusting wrecks of military vehicles, including a memorable tank lying upside down in the river, tracks up, with its gun barrel sticking out above the rapids. The road is in bad shape and it can be rough going - in many ways. One American had been robbed twice on this stretch, though with his money in his socks, he lost only some clothes and his boots.

On first view Kabul was not inviting. The wide streets were empty and dusty and swept by a strong afternoon wind. The crude apartment blocks built by past governments seemed like punishments laid on the people. The old Russian taxi I caught rattled slowly down the war-scarred streets. I ended up that first night at the Plaza Hotel where, for 6,000 Afs., there was no electricity, no water and no service. The place stank.

Prices have been inflated by shortages, uncertainty and the government's method of printing its way out of trouble. The exchange rate had risen to about 1,500 Afs. to the dollar. One kilo of tea was 5,000 Afs., a flatbread 100 Afs., a small chicken 5,000 Afs., a 2 km taxi ride 1,000 Afs., a tank of gas 50,000 Afs. A bill smaller than 50 Afs. is nearly useless.

After the hotel I was lucky to be offered a room by AP correspondent John Jennings, who has been in Kabul for more than a year and a half. The AP house has granite floors, a spiral staircase and 4 bathrooms, but the picture window was sandbagged and on the unused wet bar in the basement sat two Russian helmets for use in bombardments.

During the 2½ weeks I spent in Kabul in September there were 4 or 5 skirmishes in the suburbs. On the day following the fighting, the AP housekeeper and others would report who had been involved. Frequent contenders seemed to be Wahadat and Hezb Hekmatyar, but the gov't (Jamiat and allies) and Ittehad were also involved. For me the scariest thing was not the fighting, which could be conceived of as somewhere else, but hearing one night APCs or tanks rushing down the boulevards unseen in the dark. That windy threshing sound was the sound of death.

Kabul seemed largely intact although there is a good deal of heavy damage in the area between downtown and Kartay Char, and the University was said to be uninhabitable. In fact it seemed that every day I met unemployed professors in places like the money-changing bazaar or a deserted souvenir shop still full of old fringed leather jackets from hippy travelers.



The AP House is located in Wazir Akbar Khan, one of the wealthiest sections - where the commanders and other jihadi notables now occupy, at a very rough guess, half the houses. The commanders are the new elite. They own the newest cars in Kabul, many of which have dark tinted windows. The mujahideen at the local traffic circle, from Massoud's Shura Nizar (Supervisory Council), functioned in effect as security guards for the jihadi rulers.

I visited the zoo. My interpreter and I were the only visitors. No admission was charged. It is now occupied by the mujahideen of Junbish, the mostly Uzbek party of Gen. Dostam. I saw two lions, a very lank tiger which had been hit by shrapnel, a gray bear of some sort and an enormous boar. I missed the three vultures. The Dostam people boasted that they were a necessary buffer between the gov't and the Hazara Wahadat areas. If it were up to these other people there would be no animals at all, they said. They also claimed that sometime last year the mujahideen occupying the zoo had fed the bodies of their enemies to the lions. But the identities of the feeders and their victims changed with the telling.

Around the city, the movie theaters are generally closed but, from time to time, apparently unpredictably, it is said that a jihad film or, oddly, a Hong Kong martial arts film is shown. At the Writers' Association they were arguing with the gov't over a president who had not been elected by them but sent over from one of the ministries.

An interview with Pres. Rabbani was arranged at the Arg. While I sat in the full waiting room, an aide lectured me on the modernity of Islam which was demonstrated by the story of the Prophet in which he is taken to heaven and returned so suddenly that a chain was still swinging from the doorknob. This was taken as foreshadowing the relativity theory and space travel.

Rabbani is a calm man, not missing a beat when the lights in the palace went out in the middle of one of his answers. The impression made by Cdr. Massoud was entirely different. In his case there was no intimation of the Arabic-Muslim ideal of the hospitable but aloof leader. He came in wearing local clothes in white and a Western-style suit coat and sat down with a powerful twist of those exaggerated shoulders. As he listened his head dipped in small nervous tics. The first topic with Massoud was the cause of the continuing war. I suggested it was ethnic differences. Massoud demurred: ethnicity was the hobbyhorse of foreign analysts; in fact the major contending parties were mixed (here he interestingly included Hekmatyar), he said, except for perhaps Wahadat and Junbish. The gov't enjoyed support from many different areas, notably those in Pashtun territory. His answers were quite lengthy; they seemed to bog down even loyal advisor and translator Dr. Abdullah. When I persisted, asking why Hekmatyar had the support he did if ethnicity were so unimportant, Massoud cut off discussion and turned to his next interlocutor.

* * *

On the way to Kandahar I stopped in Spin Boldok. Though there are 4 parties active here, the "mayor" was Mullah Akhtar Jan of Hezb Hekmatyar, a shaven-headed, beady-eyed man who immediately asked to see my passport and inspected it for the requisite Afghan visa, which, fortunately, I had. He blasted the provincial gov't of Kandahar City, which is more or less dominated by the moderate parties and Jamiat, claiming that it controlled nothing more than the city.

In Kandahar City, Mullah Naqeeb, whom I'd met in 1988, is now the military commander of the province. I found him in the half-ruined "corps," the traditional south-

western HQ of the Afghan Army, taking a siesta on the floor in front of his desk. His office was probably the only space in the whole compound (which encompassed several acres) that hadn't been more or less stripped. He immediately launched into a tirade/denunciation/appeal on how much Kandahar needed and deserved foreign help. He also denied everything Akhtar Jan had said.

I had hoped to stay with Mullah Naqeeb and was unfortunately given my wish: I discovered that his life has not changed that much since the rugged days of guerrilla fighting. He essentially is camping out in his headquarters. That, together with his love of long-winded and even fantastic rhetoric, adds to a traditional image. In fact, the criticism of his main rival, Haji Amir Lali of the Gailani party, is that Naqeeb is still fighting jihad.

Mullah Naqeeb drove me around the city (seeing us, people seemed generally indifferent) to demonstrate how peaceful everything was - part of his pitch for more foreign aid. The explosions and sounds of automatic weapon fire were only celebrations he assured me. And, in fact, like Kabul and Jalalabad, the markets and shops of Kandahar seemed well-stocked and busy, I put damage at between a quarter and a third of all buildings, though others estimated more. The gov't of the city & province has no money to fix any of this; apart from customs duties and the printing of money by the Kabul gov't (still being done in Moscow), the sources of income of any of the jurisdictions in Afghanistan are at least mysterious, and probably non-existent.

Paul Overby
Portland, Oregon
October, 1993

Iran's Assurances on Afghan Repatriation

TEHERAN, Iran, Sept. 17 — The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Sadako Ogata, says Teheran has given assurances that 2.2 million Afghan refugees who still reside in Iran will be repatriated voluntarily.

"Iran pulls the largest number of refugees today," Mrs. Ogata said at a press conference here on Friday. "We would like to make sure that Afghan refugees go back voluntarily to safe areas and to their homes."

Forced repatriation of Afghans by Iranian authorities caused enough concern for the High Commissioner to demand assurances "at the highest level" of the Iranian Government that refugees should return voluntary, United Nations officials aid.

Emphasizing that repatriation was "a very complicated operation," Mrs. Ogata played down instances of what she called "wrong policies at the local level" and praised Teheran's willingness to deal with the refugees.

An estimated 800,000 Afghans returned to their country in the last year, according to United Nations figures, but 2.2 million Afghans still reside in

Iran with little hope of finding safety and prosperity at home. Close to a million remain in Pakistan.

Having sheltered 80,000 Iraqi Shiite Muslims and more than a million Kurds after the Persian Gulf war, Teheran has begun to show signs of aid fatigue, faced with a domestic population explosion and high unemployment.

A potential refugee crisis on its northern border with Azerbaijan recently forced Iran to establish a camp with 20,000 tents for Azerbaijanis fleeing the war with Armenia, three miles from the border, inside Azerbaijan territory.

NYT 9/18



REFUGEES 8/93

Nancy Hatch Dupree was asked by UNOCHA to visit Kabul to report on the status of libraries, archives, museums & historical buildings in Kabul. She visited Kabul from 28-30 September, 1993. The following is from her report to UNOCHA, dated 10/3/93:

It was possible to open only a small window into the task put before me. The situation is not as bleak as rumors report, but things are in a terrible muddle and the potential for irreparable losses in the near future calls for immediate action.

The artifacts of the National Museum are in Darulaman, 6 miles south of the center of Kabul. The entire Museum staff sits in a scruffy, cramped, windowless, lightless, make-shift office partitioned off the dining hall on the ground floor of the Ministry of Information & Culture, where I visited them. The Director, Mr. Farzan was appointed a month ago. The Asst. Director, Mr. Najibullah Popal, the only trained staff member left, worked in the Museum for some years before the 1978 coup. The Director was delighted with the gift of my guidebook as he has no idea of what is supposed to be in his charge. The staff is not allowed to visit the Museum which is in an area controlled by Hezbe Wahdat.

I sincerely regret that I was unable to visit the Museum... Nevertheless the time spent with the staff was pleasant & informative. They impressed me with the urgency of initiating some sort of immediate action...

Most of the Museum objects had been crated and stored in the basement before the change of gov't. Popal's recommendation that they be moved out of Darulaman & distributed to several safe locations throughout the city had, however, not been acted upon. Popal had no contact with the Museum for 3 months before the building was hit by a rocket (5/12/93), while the area was under the control of the Shura Nazar. One week before it was hit he took the risk of making an unauthorized visit during which he was able to check all the crates. He found only two shists [sic] missing.

Three days after the fire in the roof had burned out, he went out again and discovered that the large murals from Delbarjin (north-west of Balkh; 4-5th cent. A.D.), which had been left in the upper gallery because they were too heavy to move, had been destroyed. The basement was untouched.

One week ago he passed by once again & noted some unidentifiable remains of packing cases on the ground outside the Museum. He was not allowed into the basement, but this evidence is extremely worrisome. Although CNN reporters noted at the beginning of September that the seals on the basement doors were intact, it can not be certain that these are the seals placed there by Popal on his last inspection. What is behind the seals is unknown. The large statuary, marble inscriptions & the monumental bowl from Kandahar in the entrance foyer were still in place.

Winter snows & rain are additional hazards since the roof is completely burned off. Removal of the crates from Darulaman is still desirable. Records of objects have been meticulously maintained so an inventory check is possible.

The fate of the Tillya Tepe Golden Hoard is unknown. It was placed in the vault of the Central Bank inside the presidential palace. Its safety could easily be confirmed but would take authorization from the highest quarters.

THE CITY - Impressions after 14 years. My overall impression was one of forlorn shabbiness. It looks somehow shriveled. It is gray, without its former sparkle.

From the Editor:

Occasional Paper #32 will accompany this issue to all those who ordered it with their subscriptions. (The only exceptions being overseas airmail subscribers; the Paper will be sent sea mail.) The 52-page Paper, "The Cold War in Afghanistan: Soviet Ascendancy in Afghan Aid during the 1973-78 Regnancy of Mohammad Daoud in Post-WW II Soviet-American Competitive Context," is by Ralph Groves, a Columbia graduate who is currently a Doctoral Fellow in Modern World History at St. John's University. Those who didn't order it with their subscriptions can receive a copy by sending us a check for \$10.

News about Afghanistan, while sparsely reported in the US press, fills this issue - there may be more than you want to read. And this is without the Kabul Times and any recent issues of AFGHANews. Maybe the Kabul Gov't has run out of old regime stamps! (See tender notice on p. 35.)

We remain grateful for the eagle eyes, sharp scissors & fluent pens of our readers whose faithful contributions make this publication possible. We hope for your continued support. We'll take this opportunity, too, to remind you that 1994 subscription renewal forms will be sent with the January issue - so start saving now. The deadline for that issue is January 2.

Until then, happy holidays.

EVENTS

The 4th Int'l Research & Advisory Panel Conference, sponsored by the Refugee Studies Programme at the University of Oxford, UK, will take place from 5-9 January, 1994. Dr. Pierre Centlivres will speak on refugees from Afghanistan on January 6. For further information, contact Ruth Burton, IRAP Conference Coordinator, Refugee Studies Ctr., Queen Elizabeth House, 21 St Giles, Oxford, OX1 3LA, UK.

PIECES DE LA RESISTANCE: AFGHANISTAN'S WAR RUGS from the collections of Neil & Elaine Reynolds & others at The Gallery at Bachelor's Hall, 8014 Germantown Avenue, Philadelphia, opened on 10/23. The exhibition is on display until 12/18. For specific times call Tom Tarantino at 215-247-3501.



But I also saw a scattering of newly whitewashed walls & buildings &, as in the old days, street facades give no hint of the blooming gardens which still lie behind dingy, anonymous fronts. From this I take hope that the present dreary state will quickly vanish once peace returns.

I feel confident that this optimism may also apply to devastated Jadi Maiwand & Chandiwal. The substantial buildings on Jadi Maiwand were, after all, only a facade, one building deep, constructed after homes were simply bulldozed into oblivion down the length of the avenue in 1959-60. The rest was marked for demolition in the 1964 Russian 25-Year Plan for urban renewal. Despite its charms, the old city was a squalid & unhealthy place with open sewage drains, toilets emptying into public thoroughfares, no piped water & few open spaces for recreation. My plea (much more than a recommendation) is that the city renewal planners of the future will consider the use of adobe for culturally appropriate housing designs. Superb experimental research in the use of improved adobe has been conducted in Peshawar by the Bost Construction Unit under the direction of Olivier & Catherine Scherrer. A large corps of masons trained in the new techniques exist; they should be utilized...

One need only look at the sprawl of the Russian-styled microroyan complexes for an example of what should be avoided at all costs. They ooze across the landscape, occupying five times the space they did 14 years ago. I visited one of the newest blocks & found the staircases already deteriorating & the exterior surroundings uncared for... Without in any way meaning to sound facetious, I would urge the implementation of a tree-planting project for the microrayon environs.

I was pleased to note that the trees of Kabul have not suffered unduly as I had been led to expect. In fact, the plantings along the road from the airport have grown so much that at first I was completely disoriented. I panicked when I was unable to find landmarks now hidden behind thick foliage. Tree-shaded Shahr-i-Nao Park still thrives & hosts many more cafes & kebab shops near the cinema which they tell me is now showing Indian films.

The trees in Zarnegar Park have also grown tremendously, changing its character considerably with scores of open-air peddlers plying their trades inside the park.

Downtown Kabul is much more congested than it was & I noted many more Turkomen & other northern faces than I remember before. Women move freely without escorts in downtown Kabul. The young lady accompanying me did not hesitate to follow when I plunged into crowded areas. For the most part the girls dress in long-sleeved tunics & long skirts draped in many different patterns, sometimes hemmed with ruffles. Diaphanous headscarves are worn without any other outer covering. Chaddars & chaderis are noticeable mainly because they are so rarely seen.

Soldiers wearing a variety of uniforms & carrying an intimidating array of heavy weapons are everywhere. In the areas I was in, however, they were not only polite but very friendly, even jocular. The ones I queried said they belonged to Masood, Baba Jan & Momin. Everyone wanted a picture taken. I always asked permission to take a picture. Not once was I refused, by shopkeepers, people on the street, or guards at public offices. The latter was a big change from former days when I often met with resistance even though I carried a letter from Daoud himself while conducting research on the old buildings of Kabul.

The people of Kabul have not changed. They are still warm, charming, helpful & hospitable. They deserve the peace that will allow them to restore Kabul to its former brightness.

[We'll have more of Nancy's report in the next issue.]

OPINION

Yar Kohsar of Hartford, CT, took exception to an article in the last FORUM about Khodidad Basharmal. Here are excerpts from his letter:

...[He is a] person who's hands are stained with Afghan blood. He is a native of Laghman Prov. and had his primary & high school education there. While he was in high school, he joined the communist party of Parcham, headed by Babrak Karmal & supported by the KGB. He was a very active student & tried very hard to recruit other students to the party. All his brothers & other members of his family were devoted members of Parcham. After he graduated from high school, he entered Nangarhar Medical School as a very hard line communist & there he began to campaign for Parcham & spew the communist ideology & Marx manifesto, also wearing little badges of Lenin & Marx & maintaining his alliance with Khalq as well....

When in 1978 the shameful Russian-backed coup d'etat took place, the era of terror began and thousands of innocent Afghans vanished, Dr. Basharmal was at the service of the Khalq-Parcham party. He was a very active secretary of his beloved party in Laghman Province. Basharmal is a big & notorious liar because he called the communist party a reform party. He said he was a socialist. He is trying to deceive people by words, not deeds. He was offered membership on the Central Committee & he began his career as a deputy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This is a very important post and is always offered to very trusty party members.

For more than 10 years the Soviet Union troops & the Parchamis & the KHAD brutalized, terrorized, burglarized & slayed over 1½ mil-

lion Afghans, mostly old men, women & children.... During these years, why did Mr. Basharmal keep quiet? He did not raise his voice. Instead, he facilitated the way for the killing of his people. Our people suffered massive brutality by the Russian puppet regime...even after the withdrawal of Russian troops from Afghanistan... He should have resigned at the moment the Russian troops invaded, but he neither resigned nor opposed; he wholeheartedly welcomed the invaders. If he was powerless, then he should have joined the freedom fighters. Now he is desperate to make up for his past betrayal...

For 5 years he helped the Russians in the Nangarhar area, pinpointing resistance areas, sending Afghan youth to the USSR for brain washing & communist indoctrination...

He was appointed Minister of Education and laid off hundreds of non-communist teachers & changed the school curriculum to the Soviet model...

He always looked for a lucrative job... He finally came to the UN to serve his communist regime. But when he realized that the Najib regime was on the verge of collapse...he resigned from his UN post. Now he lives in the States & has become a patriot. That is all hogwash... He is trying to deceive the Americans & take advantage of the circumstances for his own benefit... Why did he not resign in those days of massacre & indiscriminate slaughter? Only now he claims to love his people & his country... Hogwash!

Yar Kohsar
Hartford, CT



Basharmal

Taking New York Home, Bric by Brac

By JAMES BARRON

RALPH SARWARI can tell when the economy is turning sour in Germany or Japan, perking up in Brazil or taking off in Taiwan. He can tell when the French franc is falling and the Swiss franc is soaring. And he can do all of this without leaving his place beneath the fluorescent lights of Xanadu.

Not Kubla Khan's domed domain, not the too-opulent-for-words mansion in "Citizen Kane," but the cabash of kitsch, the Monte Carlo of mementos, the Shangri-La of souvenirs: a store at 1528 Broadway, at the northern edge of Times Square, that under Mr. Sarwari's management, sells everything from Statuettes of Liberty to "I ♡ NY" cigarette lighters, "I ♡ NY" pencils and "I ♡ NY" T-shirts. Not to mention the \$89 denim jackets with lower Manhattan hand-painted on the back under a sky of glittery spangles. One day, a Japanese man bought 12.

No one, not Mr. Sarwari, nor even Scott C. Borowsky, publisher of Souvenir and Novelty magazine, knows what part of the \$1 billion-a-year national souvenir business is rung up on the cash registers of New York. In 1991, the most recent year for which figures are available, state economic development officials counted 693 gift, novelty and souvenir shops in the city.

It's a competitive business, at least in midtown. Between 34th and 57th Streets are more than a dozen shops that sell only souvenirs, T-shirts and postcards. Then there are several dozen others that also sell what Samuel M. Ehrenhalt, the regional commissioner of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, calls "items of real use," from cameras to luggage — merchandise that makes the souvenir business here different from most other places.

Mr. Sarwari has other kinds of competition — street vendors who sell identical-looking but less-expensive T-shirts. He says his, at \$14.99 apiece, are all cotton, while the \$5 ones on the street are a cotton-polyester blend.

In such a crowded marketplace, some retailers might try glitzy window displays or splashy marketing campaigns to set themselves apart. Not Mr. Sarwari, who spends less than \$10,000 a year on advertising. Xanadu's secret, he says, is its location.

"How," he asks, "can a tourist miss Times Square?"

But like a hotel manager who sees red ink when bookings suddenly fall off, Mr. Sarwari is all too aware when consumer confidence 5,000 miles away hits an air pocket: foreign tourists buy the \$2.99 Statue of Liberty ball-point pen instead of the \$99 replica the size of a soft-drink bottle.

MR. SARWARI said he has to take in \$400 a square foot to break even. By most retailers' standards, that's a lot. Macy's toted up an average of \$203.80 a square foot at its 110 stores last year, according to the Blackstone Group, an investment firm. Of course, department-store dynamics are different from the impulse buying that brings in big bucks at Xanadu, but both share the bad news. "When

the recession hit, I saw it," Mr. Sarwari said. "The food industry, people don't stop eating, but they stopped traveling."

Still, merchandise that says "New York" sells. "New York, there's that excitement," Mr. Sarwari said. "Coming from a small town somewhere, they want to be part of it. They don't want to live here." Xanadu's 16-member staff does; this showcase of American kitsch is totally run by immigrants. Mr. Sarwari, who was born in Afghanistan in 1982, 35 years ago and arrived from Pakistan in 1982, can't imagine himself anywhere else.

"I have relatives in Chicago, Virginia and California who say, 'How can you live here?'" he said. "But I love it. I was in Chicago for a sporting goods show last month. Very clean, very nice, but I'm sorry, it was boring."

And no Statue of Liberty. It is the consummate New York icon (available at Xanadu in six sizes and three colors), but it took him years to visit the big one in the harbor. "I had out-of-town guests," he said. Did he like it? "Yeah. It had some meaning. As an immigrant myself, I felt the power."

Ditto the World Trade Center, whose popularity surged after what Mr. Sarwari calls "the incident" — the bombing in February. Postcards and T-shirts with the twin towers have been selling faster than tiny replicas, Mr. Sarwari said.

"The Japanese love them. With Japanese, they don't buy one or two. Any piece they buy, they buy 20. They are great customers, but they all want different bags. They want 40 plastic bags so they can present the gifts individually."

There is more.

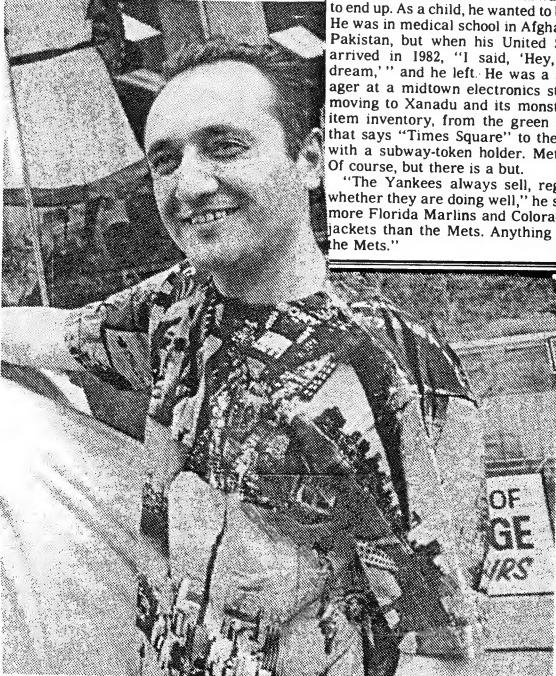
"Germans? Not like Japanese," he said. "French, they're cheap, I can tell. I speak the language, I overhear things. The sales tax is shocking. In France — even at 30 percent or 45 percent in Scandinavia they don't feel it, it's built into the price. But 8.5 percent? They never get used to it."

In all kinds of languages. One customer, Giovanna Caprini, an 18-year-old university student from Milan, was buying a dozen pencils. "Piace," she said. A friend, Doris Pizzino of Floral Park, L.I., explained that this meant she liked Xanadu very much, despite the sales tax.

INCREASINGLY, the souvenirs as well as the customers come from far away. Mr. Sarwari sells a made-in-Korea-or-Taiwan piggy bank that looks like a giant penny, and the ballpoint pens with King Kong climbing the Empire State Building are Danish imports. "Somebody came in wanting an American-made pen, a regular pen," he said. "I don't sell that."

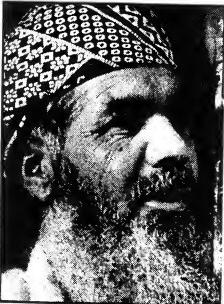
Xanadu is not where Mr. Sarwari expected to end up. As a child, he wanted to be a doctor. He was in medical school in Afghanistan and Pakistan, but when his United States visa arrived in 1982, "I said, 'Hey, American dream,'" and he left. He was a stock manager at a midtown electronics store before moving to Xanadu and its monstrous 2,000-item inventory, from the green street sign that says "Times Square" to the key chain with a subway-token holder. Mets jackets? Of course, but there is a bat.

"The Yankees always sell, regardless of whether they are doing well," he said. "I sell more Florida Marlins and Colorado Rockies jackets than the Mets. Anything more than the Mets."



Suzanne DeChillo/The New York Times

AFGHAN WARRIOR JOINS THE GREAT GAME



A self-styled emir has carved out a kingdom amid tribal chaos,
Tim McGirk
writes from Herat

FOR BRITISH spies in the 19th century who travelled, disguised as horse-traders or wandering holy men, through 120-day sandstorms to reach the blue minarets of this Afghan city, Herat was the ultimate prize in the Great Game of empire-building, played by Britain, Russia and Persia.

An ancient oasis city wedged between deserts and mountains like jagged shards of glass, Herat has again become a focus of the Great Game, though some players have changed. Iran, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan are the rivals now. At stake are religion, oil and conquest.

This chess-match of intrigue revolves around one man, the self-styled Emir of Herat, Ismail Khan, a compact and flinty-looking man with a long, grandfatherly beard. While the rest of Afghanistan has collapsed into tribal wars, Mr Khan has carved out his own kingdom. The emir even has his own foreign minister, who wears a new suit and a stylishly clipped beard.

Mr Khan was an army captain in the mid-1970s when he was ordered by his Communist superiors to fire on a mob in the Herat bazaar. He refused, and in the best traditions of the Great Game, he and his soldiers massacred Herat's 350 Soviet advisers and their families, just as the Afghans in 1841 hacked down British officers in Kabul.

Moscow retaliated by carpet-bombing Herat, whose mosques,

bridges and fortresses had stood for 1,000 years. Now it looks as though a fiery sword has sheared off the top of nearly every house, shop and mosque. The ferocity was such that the lapis-blue tiles cladding the tall minarets blew away, like leaves ripped off in a gale. More than 25,000 people died in the bombing raids during the 14-year war, and 150,000 fled across the Iranian border, 80 miles west. The Soviet Union extracted more than revenge from Herat: they built a huge airbase nearby from which their warplanes could strike the Gulf oilfields.

The Russians may have lost the last round, but Herat retains its strategic value. The emir's four-piece army band has been busy lately at the airstrip, trumpeting in visitors such as Pakistan's chief of military intelligence and the Saudi ambassador to Islamabad. Both Pakistan and Saudi Arabia fear that Iran might seize upon the chaos in Afghanistan and grab Herat. For the Saudis, it is a matter of faith. They are Wahabis and consider the Iranian Shia to be heretics. Both countries want to expand their brand of Islam into the Central Asian republics via Herat.

The emirs of Herat have long resisted Iranian armies with spears, arrows and, later, with cannon-fire and long muskets. Mr Khan possesses more than 40 tanks and captured Soviet MiGs, helicopters and transport planes. But Iran is not threatening Herat with force. Instead, it is trying to destabilise the emirate through trade embargoes and by flooding Herat with starving Afghan refugees.

United Nations relief officials claim that 1,500 Afghans a day are arriving from war refugee camps inside Iran. A dozen Afghans standing in a lorry said that Iranian border guards had stripped them of their gold, televisions, rugs and money, the paltry accumulation of 14 years spent inside Iran, labouring at menial jobs. Rudy Rodrigues, the UN team leader, said: "Herat had 250,000 people before the war. Now there are 400,000 and we are finding a lot of children suffering from malnutrition. It'll get worse." Afghan trucks were recently banned from entering Iran, so all supplies now come from Turkmenistan.

In a city where the arts of calligraphy and Persian miniatures reached their zenith, the schoolchildren no longer have chalk or slate for drawing. Their textbooks are ancient and spiteful. One maths book, printed in the US during the Afghan war, offered the following problem: "If you have two dead Communists, and kill three more, how many dead Communists do you have?"

Herat's hospital has no blood bank, so that whenever a child picks up one of the pretty butter-

fly-shaped mines left by the Soviet forces and blows himself up, the orderlies have to search the bazaar for blood donors. UN experts claim that Herat is ringed with more than 9,000 Soviet mines, and every week the mines claim around seven victims.

The emir is respected in Herat. He is a war hero and cares more about his subjects than amassing plunder or running heroin. He is just and modest. He fasts from sunset to sundown in honour of fallen mujahedin fighters; it was not his idea that Herat's people bow in his presence and call him emir. "No body, not even the Iranians, can impose their will on us," he said.

It is doubtful if the emir could last without the UN. It is de-mining and the relief team is building bridges, roads and canals. The UN

supplies wheat to the starving in Herat. "From pistachio nuts," Mr Rodrigues said, "we're the emir's only resource." But as Western interest fades and aid is cut, the emir could soon be another casualty in the Great Game.



9/30



THE INDEPENDENT (UK)

Old Bailey told of racist taunts

A REFUGEE from war-torn Afghanistan was kicked and battered to death just feet from his south London home, by a gang wielding iron bars, sticks and heavy plastic pipe, an Old Bailey jury was told yesterday.

Ruhullah Aramesh, a 24-year-old linguist, was beaten to the ground and his head "smashed by several deliberate blows" by six white youths who had shouted racist taunts, David Paget, for the prosecution, alleged.

Mr Aramesh never regained consciousness and died two days later from injuries which included brain damage. • •

In the dock are Paul Hannan, 18; Richard Turner, 19; Jamie Ware, 18; and three 17-year-olds who cannot be named because they are juveniles. They have all pleaded not guilty to murdering Mr Aramesh on 31 July last year. One of the juveniles has admitted manslaughter on the grounds of diminished responsibility.

All come from Thornton Heath where Mr Aramesh was killed.

The attackers fled when passers-by intervened. But Mr Paget added: "By far the most serious incident happened about an hour later."

By then the youths had moved on to Thornton Heath, where Mr Aramesh had attended a family gathering and had then gone with friends to

a petrol station to buy drinks. Outside one of the girls in their group had been "touched up" by one of the juveniles, Mr Paget said. One of the white youths apologised, saying his friend was drunk.

The group accepted the apology and went home — but were followed by the teenagers who were "looking for trouble". They banged on the front door and ordered them to "come outside".

"At least three of them were armed with iron bars or stones. They were enticing the Afghans away from their doorway, hoping they would follow," Mr Paget said.

"There were taunts, 'Paki bastards', shouted at the Afghans," he added, but there was no suggestion that "any of those Afghans started the trouble which ensued".

The white youths summoned help from friends spilling out of a nearby pub. Witnesses heard cries of "there's a fight — some Pakis want their heads kicked in". A running fight involving 20 youths followed.

The Afghans ran for the safety of their home, but Mr Aramesh slipped and was surrounded, kicked, beaten and battered.

The trial continues today.

HEATHER MILLS
Home Affairs Correspondent

no date

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

LES AVENTURES DE MOLLA NASRODDIN with texts in Persian & French, translated & transcribed by A. Perny & with illustrations by Yannis Marigo & calligraphy by Hamed Khosrawi has been published by CEREDAF, 12 rue de Cotte, 75012 Paris, 63Ff + 15 Ff postage, by postal money order only. 77 pp., paper. ISBN 2-906657-20-4.

The CENTRAL ASIAN MONITOR is a bi-monthly magazine featuring articles on Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan & Turkmenistan. It is available from CAM, RR 2, Box 6880, Fair Haven, VT 05743. A recent issue contained an article on "Publishing in Central Asia" by Eden Naby. Subscriptions: Individual - \$60/year; Institutions - \$96/year. Single issues are \$16.

THE WORLD PAPER, an int'l monthly newspaper supplement, is published by World Times, Inc., 210 World Trade Center, Boston, MA 02210. The May 1993 issue had articles by Eden Naby, "Between Market & Mosque," & Richard Frye, "Where Have all the Camels Gone? The Silk Route's Glory Days."

COVENANT OF THE POPPIES, a suspense novel by Colin D. Peel, St. Martin's Press, New York, 1993. 215 pp. \$17.95. ISBN 0-312-09264-4. (See p. 30.)

MUQARNAS, an annual on Islamic art & architecture, has an article on "The Paysage as Funerary Imagery in the Timurid Period" by L. Golombok in the 1993 volume. (#10) xiv + 390 pp., illus. \$63. ISBN 90 04 09748 1. Available from E.J. Brill, 24 Hudson St., Kinderhook, NY 12106.

HOLY WAR, UNHOLY VICTORY by Kurt Lohbeck, with a foreword by Dan Rather is due out this month from Regnery Press.

"Afghanistan's Uneasy Peace" by Richard Mackenzie with photos by Steve McCurry in NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC, Oct. 1993. Pp. 58-79.



Forthcoming....

THE KINGDOM OF AFGHANISTAN & THE UNITED STATES 1828-1973 by Leon B.

Poullada & Leila D.J. Poullada is being published by Dageforde Press for the Center for Afghan Studies at the Univ.

of Nebraska at Omaha. The 300-page paperback will have photos, bibliography, appendices & an index. It will cost \$15.95.

HOLY BLOOD by Paul Overby from Praeger

MULLAH, MARX & MUJAHID by Ralph Magnus & Eden Naby from Westview.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE FATEFUL PEBBLE: AFGHANISTAN'S ROLE IN THE FALL OF THE SOVIET EMPIRE, Anthony Arnold, Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1993. 224 pp., \$30.

Following the withdrawal of Soviet troops in 1989, Afghanistan fell off the screen of world attention. The crumbling, first of Moscow's empire and then of the Soviet Union itself, was much more dramatic. And what had a remote Central Asian country, once the scene of a Soviet sideshow, to do with that? Or so it seemed to many. In recent months, however, students of international affairs have begun to suggest that, somehow, Afghanistan played a part in the collapse of the Soviet Union. But exactly what its role was remains unclear to them, since few - even Soviet specialists - know much about that war.

Anthony Arnold, who knows both Afghanistan and the USSR, has previously written a study of the Russo-Afghan war and the only full study of the Afghan Communist party. Now he has once again pioneered: his new book is the first systematic attempt to assess the influence of the Afghan war on subsequent events in the USSR. Taking his title from a line by George Stewart ("A dead-tired man may stumble over a pebble and fall..."), Arnold has set out to give the Afghan pebble its due. "I submit," he says, "that the Soviet Union, beset with a myriad of...problems...was analogous to the weary traveler, and Afghanistan to the pebble that brought him down."

It is Arnold's premise that the three pillars supporting the Soviet system were the Communist party, the military and the KGB. As he sees it, each of these agencies in turn dominated the handling of Soviet policy toward communist Afghanistan - the CPSU from 1978 to 1981, the military from 1982 to 1985 and the KGB from 1985 to 1991 - and as each in turn failed, it was weakened. Thanks to a communications revolution, those failures and weaknesses were made manifest in a Soviet empire confronted with desperate internal problems. Thus weakened, these agencies were unable to respond effectively when confronted by a series of crises, culminating in the events of 1989-1991 that brought the whole Soviet edifice tumbling down.

If he does not fully support all the specifics of his argument, that may be at least in part because much about Moscow's policy and operational decisions on Afghanistan is still hidden; much therefore unavoidably remains speculative and the available data are subject to differing interpretations. "The detectable direct impact of the Afghan experience," Arnold acknowledges, "is easiest to identify in the Soviet military, difficult in the CPSU, and virtually impossible in the KGB," and his analyses of the impacts on these institutions vary correspondingly.

Nevertheless, Arnold makes a plausible and often substantial case. Much of the material in the first few chapters will be familiar to readers of Afghanistan Forum: The author summarizes the historical, cultural and psychological differences between Afghans and Russians that made it so difficult for Moscow to guide, let alone control, its protégés in Kabul. He sketches the history of Russian/Soviet - Afghan relations and reviews the fractious history of the Afghan Communist party and its factions. Having set the scene for those unfamiliar with it, he gets down to his main concerns, outlining his three-pillars premise and its applications and applying it to the events of 1978-1991.

Brezhnev's CPSU, then seemingly in unshakeable control, was unprepared for the intensity and extent of international reaction to the invasion of Afghanistan. Moscow expected a brief outcry, to be soon followed by a return to business as usual - including the détente policy Moscow had found so useful. This might in fact have happened if, as the leadership expected, the short military campaign they prepared

for had succeeded and been followed by a speedy withdrawal of Soviet forces as intended. But the instinctive response of the Afghan people - which anyone who understood the Afghans could (and did) predict - frustrated those expectations, forcing Moscow to pay a price it had not anticipated.

That unexpected price initially included, inter alia, an abrupt halt to détente; the destruction of Moscow's carefully-cultivated image as an increasingly moderate, conventional, non-expansionist power; a reversal of Jimmy Carter's policies and subsequent support for Ronald Reagan's military build-up; stiffened resolve among NATO members, resulting in the installation of Pershing missiles in Western Europe; outrage and distrust of the USSR in the Third World; continuing UN denunciations; chaos among national communist parties, some of which (notably the French CP) permanently forfeited their hard-won claims to legitimacy by supporting the invasion; possible encouragement by example to sullen Poland; and not least - in Soviet eyes - the humiliating boycott of the 1980 Moscow Olympics.

As time went on, it included economic costs, military losses (perhaps exaggerated by rumor but believed by the Soviet public) and a focus for public disillusionment even as the policy of glasnost made it possible for that disillusionment to find expression. (Arnold counters a widespread misunderstanding by noting, accurately, that Moscow's effort to consolidate its control over Afghanistan did not end with the withdrawal of Soviet ground forces in 1989 but continued until the collapse of the Soviet Union itself.)

Taking his three "pillars" one by one, Arnold first discusses the Soviet Communist Party's fruitless efforts both before and after the invasion to pull the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan together into some semblance of operational unity, whip their various protégés in Kabul into shape, and consolidate the power of a puppet regime so that its mentors could withdraw their visible presence. He attributes that failure to the combination of a decaying CPSU under the moribund Brezhnev and the interregnum leaders, Andropov and Chernenko, with the ideologically-blinded failure of Soviet personnel to understand Afghan psychology and recognize the ultimate supremacy of family and clan ties over any abstract political loyalties.

Arnold suggests that as the Party lost credibility, the political power of the military rose, despite their own miscalculations in Afghanistan. "The original Soviet intention had been to capture the Afghan army intact and use it," he writes, an expectation based on Communist success in recruiting Afghan officers; but massive rank-and-file desertions unexpectedly left them with Afghan troops "too few in number and too dispirited...to handle the intended mission," thereby necessitating an increased and continuing commitment of Soviet forces.

The armed forces' inability to bring the war to a satisfactory conclusion led, he suggests, to an end to its primacy in the making of Afghan policy, the turning point coming with the failure of repeated attacks on Ahmad Shah Massoud's forces in Panjsher, and specifically the failure of the seventh assault on the valley in 1984, a massive combined operation involving the PDPA, a large Soviet/Afghan strike force, Soviet air and ground units based in Central Asia and a special KGB/KHAD assassination team assigned to kill Massoud. Subsequently the introduction of Stinger shoulder-held missiles in 1986 constricted the use of the dreaded helicopter gunships. Meanwhile, when Gorbachev's glasnost policy opened the door to public criticism, public disenchantment with the war and - for the first time in Russian history - with the military itself emerged rapidly.

But Arnold believes that control of Afghan policy had already shifted to the KGB as early as 1985. (Interestingly enough, he does not deal significantly with the role of the GRU, the KGB's military counterpart, although it is likely that a number of PDPA leaders were under GRU rather than KGB control.) He defines the KGB's task

as an effort to establish the Kabul regime's legitimacy both at home and abroad while retaining secret Soviet control of the country - an effort that continued at least until the fall of the Najibullah regime if not beyond.

Here Arnold is forced to be increasingly speculative, as he acknowledges: although it is known that both Babrak Karmal and Najib were long-standing, thoroughly-trained KGB agents, the exact operations of their KGB controllers, then, before and since, remain murky. He outlines the cosmetic steps that were taken to erase the socialist image - dropping the word "Democratic" from the "Republic of Afghanistan," changing the labels on party organizations, restoring the pious suffix to Najibullah's name, etc., - and the efforts made once again to bring Khalq and Parcham together; and he speculates on possible KGB involvement in the several Tanai coup attempts. He even hints at Soviet links with Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. * But with all but the tip of the KGB iceberg even now still shrouded in secrecy and disinformation, he can only speculate, making this unavoidably the weakest part of his study.

Arnold is on more solid ground when he assesses the economic, political and social price the Soviet regime paid for Afghanistan, and its impact on a Soviet public newly permitted to express its feelings. Some analysts would dispute some of the data he accepts, here and in earlier chapters (e.g., actual Soviet casualty figures, or who made the decision to invade Afghanistan and when) and some of his conclusions about various Soviet tactics and policies. However, he is quite correct in pointing out that, whatever the facts may have been, and whatever the actual costs to the Soviet Union, Afghanistan's significance as a factor in increasing public resentment and weakening Communist authority in the USSR itself lay not in the facts but in what the Soviet public believed to be true - and that the very effort of the regime to conceal the truth about its Afghan adventure only fed the rumor mills.

Did Soviet military deaths total 13,833, as Pravda reported in 1989? or 18,826, as Gen. Varennikov said in 1991? No matter: the public (and many soldiers) were convinced that close to 280,000 of their sons and brothers had been killed in Afghanistan, and their disillusionment fed on that belief. Without exaggerating the impact of the Afghan war as it dragged on, year after year, Arnold discusses its role in the increase in alcoholism, the spread of drugs, and the cynicism and violence of Afghan veterans dispersed among the population.

These concluding chapters are perhaps his most effective ones.

The book contains occasional errors of fact (e.g., the Soviet geologist Okrimyuk was captured and executed by Hezb/Younos Khalis, not Hezb/Hekmatyar; Babrak is flatly identified as a Tajik although in an earlier book Arnold described his origin as uncertain - Babrak claims to be Pushtun, but in any case he is perhaps most accurately seen as the quintessential déraciné Kabuli whose ethnic roots are vaporous at best **) Other experts would find debatable some conclusions stated here as fact (e.g., that the Soviets lost the war militarily).

More seriously, Arnold fails to discuss any correlation between the developments he analyzes and contemporaneous developments in the international geopolitical arena, most notably the UN- brokered negotiations that led to the Geneva Accords of 1989;

* Suspected by many knowledgeable observers since 1979 but seldom publicly discussed.

**As the Afghan saying has it, "A Pushtun is a Pushtun, a Hazara is a Hazara, but a Kabuli is nothing." This may be one reason that Babrak (unlike Amin or Najib) was unable to rally a base of popular support in any community outside the party.

nor does he assess what the Soviets achieved strategically through those accords. (In an interview published in Ogonyuk, Gen. V.I. Varennikov, while complaining that the army should not have been dragged into Afghanistan, went on to say that Soviet forces won the war and withdrew only because its mission had been completed and Soviet forces were no longer needed - i.e., to maintain the Najibullah regime in power. In view of Najibullah's survival for another three years, even for some months after the collapse of the Soviet Union itself, which confounded the predictions of his immediate downfall, this claim cannot be dismissed out of hand.) There is no reason to think that Soviet political and military policy in Afghanistan was unconnected to their geopolitical strategy at the bargaining table.

But these flaws in no way undercut the value of Arnold's overall conclusions, which are in fact really grounded in the impact of the war on the Soviet Union, both the power centers and the public at large, rather than on the often still obscure and monumentally byzantine details of events inside Afghanistan itself. "[J]ust as an avalanche must start with some small concrete movement that triggers the awesome release of pent-up energy," he writes, "so the collapse of Soviet communism required some clearly definable proof that the system was not working, Afghanistan was one such proof, perhaps the most important one." Many who may differ with him on specific points and premises will nevertheless agree with many of his broad conclusions. And he has performed a signal service by opening the discussion and pointing the way for further research and analysis.

This is a significant book that should be widely read and thought about, not only and not even primarily by Afghanistan specialists but even more importantly by students of Soviet history, the Cold War, the collapse of communism as a world movement, geopolitics and the course of history in the second half of the 20th century. If it is not the final word on the subject, it is at least the necessary beginning.

In the Spring of 1980, as his country lay seemingly prostrate under the treads of Soviet tanks, a prescient former Afghan official told an American diplomat over coffee at my home, "A hundred and forty years ago, the Afghans with their rifles marked the beginning of the end of the British empire. It took years before the end came, but that was the turning point. Maybe God has willed that it is the fate of my people to do the same thing for the Soviet empire."

Anthony Arnold agrees.

Rosanne Klass
New York City

THE AFGHAN SYNDROME: THE SOVIET UNION'S VIETNAM, Maj. Gen. Oleg Sarin & Col. Lev Dvoretsky, Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1993. Illus., 195 pp. \$30. ISBN: 0-89141-420-7.

The Soviet military perspective on the Afghan war is presented in this chatty volume by two Russian military men, one an editor of Red Star and the other a retired officer. The volume is the first of three war books planned by the publisher. The purpose of this volume is to present "certain episodes connected with the history of the war that have not been previously disclosed and will throw some light on the real aims pursued by Soviet political and military leaders in deciding to go to war in Afghanistan." (p. xi) In this reviewer's opinion, the authors meet their goals and shed considerable light on how the Afghan war has affected internal Russian attitudes toward wars on foreign soil and particularly the cautious beligerence

which may underline future Russian political and military action in all of Central Asia. Present-day Tajikistan is a good example.

The book is divided into 5 chapters and 6 appendices, of which the most interesting for Afghan hands will be Chart F, "Soviet Casualties in the Afghan War (1979-1989)." The authors break figures into two classes with the total number of casualties running at 14% for officers (1,979) to 86% other (11,854). These figures do not include MIAs and those "Afghantsi" who died of war related problems after 1989. The number is on the low side of estimates but will probably serve as an official figure until a better one comes along.

The documentation is thin and surprisingly limited to sources available to Western scholars - from Anthony Arnold's works to articles published in MERIP. The authors appear unfamiliar with J. Bruce Amstutz's military history, Afghanistan: the First Five Years of Soviet Occupation (1986), also a militarily inclined analysis.

The richness of the work lies in the examples of warfare success, or lack of it: successful operations in Kandahar and in ravines such as Pizgoran are attributed to well coordinated air-borne operations, especially by helicopters; a failing was the inability to maintain training and combat objectives secret from the mujahidin and their sympathizers. One problem in assessing the accuracy of the material is the lack of information about sources.

While the political analysis represents the view of Moscow on events in Kabul, unexplained is the critical point about the Soviet entry into Afghanistan. Although the authors provide considerable detail in leading up to the event, the actual invasion is glossed over as the beginning of a tragic history for Afghanistan and the Soviet Union. (p. 84) The authors do cite from official communications the many requests that Taraki, and later Amin, made for technical military assistance and personnel throughout 1979. But why the help arrives in the form of troops that kill Amin is deliberately ignored. Similarly, the information about Soviet aid to Kabul after the troop withdrawal is skimpy, cliché filled and dated for a book published in 1993.

There are some grandiose statements, as when the ground troops cross back into Central Asia:

"Soon the last armored vehicles, covered with dust and dented by shells and bullets, brought the officers of the staff operation group to Soviet soil. Now, one could say there was not a single Soviet soldier left on the other bank of the river." (p. 127)

In fact, technical staff probably remained, under some pretext, just as technical military staff operated at Baghram in 1979, before the actual invasion, under the admitted lie that they were military advisors. (p. 83)

Although more documentary in style, this book carries some of the same baggage as Western novels about the Afghan war: there is little or no acknowledgement of the Afghans as people, whether members of the PDPA or the resistance. These authors must have loved Rambo.

There are many interesting passages in this book, as well as a number of summaries of communiqües that are useful. Particularly interesting is the discussion of the psychological position of the returning soldiers which will probably have long-term effects on Russian society. The photographs are somewhat familiar, although the heroic nature of some has not been seen so often in the Western press. The book is not the definitive political military analysis of the Afghan war from the Soviet perspective, but it is a start.

Eden Naby
Brimfield, MA

ORGANIZATIONS

AFGHAN DISABLED SOCIETY

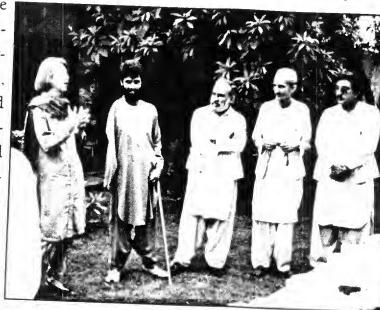
The Afghan Disabled Society (ADS) was established in 1989 by a group of disabled Afghans living as refugees in Pakistan. The president and founder, Abdul Rahman Sahak, is a triple amputee, having lost both legs and an arm in a mine explosion.

With funds from USAID, The Asia Foundation has provided support for the organization since November 1991. This has enabled ADS to conduct surveys of the refugee camps, establish a database on training opportunities, scholarships, medical treatment, and employment possibilities for the disabled, and to establish communication with organizations concerned with the rights of the disabled throughout the world. The United Nations estimates that there are two million disabled Afghan men, women, and children.

In addition to war-related injuries, many are disabled by polio and malnutrition and other poverty-related causes.

ADS works with other agencies to refer disabled Afghans to the appropriate sources of assistance. ADS has printed a pamphlet on access for the mobility-impaired and distributed it to all reconstruction agencies to assure that consideration is given to their needs as buildings and roads are repaired.

ADS's work has increased awareness in the Afghan community and among donors of the numbers and plight of the disabled. More than sixty disabled Afghans have enrolled in various training courses, two have been sent abroad for medical treatment, and hundreds have been referred to local health and therapy centers. ADS produces a newsletter for disabled Afghans and the ADS offices have served as a comfortable gathering place for them. ADS office staff are recruited from among the



Elizabeth White, former Director of the Afghan program, is shown here with Abdul Rahman Sahak (second from left) and other Foundation grantees at a reception at the Foundation's office in Peshawar.

"One cannot do without the ideas, creativity and enterprise of fellow human beings, organizations and governments. Our participation in 'Independence '92' [was] worth more than a university degree to us. We realized that everything is possible with hard work, acceptance, and responsibility."

disabled. When the situation in Afghanistan is more secure, ADS will establish branches in different provinces to coordinate efforts on behalf of the disabled and to assure that the disabled are represented in local, provincial, and national leadership councils.

Another Foundation grant enabled two Afghans to attend "Independence '92," an international conference on the rights of the disabled, held in Vancouver. The Asia Foundation arranged an observation tour for the Afghan attendees of Canadian organizations in rural and urban areas following the conference. The participants questioned Canadian leaders about financial support for disabled rights groups and observed that even in a wealthy country such organizations must rely

upon government or foundation grants and volunteer assistance. Attendance at the conference increased the Afghans' self-confidence and international contacts and made them

change the name of their organization to reflect its role as an organization of, rather than for, Afghan disabled.

One of the participants, reflecting on his experience in Canada, wrote, "One cannot do without the ideas, creativity and enterprise of fellow human beings, organizations and governments. Our participation in 'Independence '92' and the observation tour were made possible by the dedication of many people from around the world and were worth more than a university degree to us. We realized that everything is possible with hard work, acceptance, and responsibility."

REVIEW OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE'S COUNTRY REPORTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES FOR 1992

From the LAWYERS COMMITTEE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS,
330 Seventh Ave., New York, NY 1993. Issued
in July, 1993:

This year's report on Afghanistan was prepared under the most difficult conditions imaginable. In April, the Soviet-backed government that had ruled Afghanistan for the past 14 years collapsed. Although an interim coalition government was established, as the report correctly points out it lacks any effective central authority. In the ensuing power vacuum, chaos has reigned, with various parts of the country under local *de facto* rule. Fighting between various political parties, ethnic groups and religious sects has at times surpassed in intensity fighting during the previous 14-year civil war. The number of groups vying for control throughout the country and the shifting of fragile coalitions made it extremely difficult to determine government responsibility for human rights abuses, as it was often unclear who the government was.

As if the above conditions were not challenging enough, the report states that "the U.S. government has had no official presence in Afghanistan since 1989, adding that it "draws to a large extent on non-U.S. Government sources." Furthermore, the United Nations and other western aid groups withdrew their personnel from Afghanistan as the fighting intensified, further hindering the compilation of credible information.

Under these circumstances, the report should be highly commended for providing an overall accurate and fair assessment. The introductory section presents a very clear overview of the events. It correctly identifies the ineffectiveness of the interim government as the most significant human rights factor of 1992, citing the government's inability to enforce its guarantees of human rights, creating an environment in which individual rights were neither defined nor protected and were routinely violated. Most sections of the report were particularly strong, providing as much detail as was available. The listing of prominent victims of political killings is thorough.

In certain other sections of the report, a lack of such detail led to statements that while not false, were misleading as to the seriousness of the problem. The prime example is found in the section on

rights of citizens to change their government. There, the report mentions the election of President Rabbani to an additional two year term by a Grand Council in late December. The report's lone comment on this event is that a number of Afghan leaders questioned the legitimacy of the Grand Council and the means by which its members were elected. However, no mention was made of the following significant developments relating to the election. In early December, Rabbani indicated that he would refuse to surrender power at the end of his four-month interim term. This caused General Abdul Rashid Dostam, a former communist military commander who entered into an alliance with the interim government, to seize control of the Kabul airport and several other key installations around the city, and engage in fighting with government troops from December 6 to 11. Rabbani only assented to elections after this show of force by Dostam, which resulted in about 100 deaths. Furthermore, several *mujahidin* parties comprising the interim government boycotted the elections amid reports that Rabbani's camp bribed Council delegates to improperly influence the outcome. These details omitted from the report cast the legitimacy of the Rabbani government and its respect for political rights in greater doubt than the report's language would lead the reader to believe.

In another section, the report cited "numerous reports of assaults against Sikhs and Hindus during the general disorder in Kabul." While true, this statement alone fails to convey the extent to which these groups were targets of persecution and the seriousness of the abuses. In June, a Hindu family in Kabul was killed when armed *mujahidin* tied them up in a power cable and electrocuted them. Agence France Presse, Reuters and the Indian press carried numerous reports in June and July of killings, rapes and abductions of Hindus and Sikhs in Afghanistan, as well as the looting of Hindu and Sikh homes and businesses. The Indian government lodged a formal protest with the interim Afghan government and then interim President Mojaddedi felt compelled by the gravity of the abuses to issue a formal apology to the Sikh and Hindu communities.

Finally, the report failed to discuss the human rights situation of the Afghan refugee community in Pakistan which numbered some 3.5 million at the start of 1992. Although this subject has in the past been covered by the country report on Pakistan, this year the Pakistan report specifically stated that this subject would be found in the Afghanistan report. In fact, the Afghanistan report's only reference to this topic was to mention that at least 1.1 million Afghans returned from Pakistan during 1992. No mention was made of the conditions facing the over two million refugees remaining in Pakistan.

Much of the report is lacking in specific detail. However, this is largely attributable to the lack of credible information or to the still unsettled nature of the new government's legal system and institutions.

From the 9/26 NYT Book Review:

We don't get much adventure fiction from New Zealand, but if Colin D. Peel's book **COVENANT OF THE POPPIES** (*Thomas Dunne/St. Martin's*, \$17.95) is representative of what is going on there, the loss is ours. The writing is lean and hard, pungent and well organized. Mr. Peel seems to have learned a lot since "Firestorm" in 1984.

"Covenant of the Poppies" starts in Afghanistan, where Mike McConnell, a British arms dealer, is faced with conflicting factions. An attempt on his life sends him back to London, where his wife and son are killed by a booby trap intended for him. He suspects that the killers were hired by the Joint Afghan Relief Organization (JARO), a group beyond suspicion in the eyes of the world. Notables from various countries sit on its board, and they can exert tremendous power. But McConnell knows that JARO deals in cocaine.

A resourceful guy, he starts to collect evidence against JARO. He is helped by a Russian woman who has infiltrated the conglomerate. They find that cocaine is the least of it. A diabolical plot is being hatched.

With all the hectic action, the prose is remarkably contained. McConnell is as laconic as they come, and the author does not try to put fancy words or long sentences in his mouth. All the dialogue sounds like real-life speech, and Mr. Peel avoids adverbitis (would-be descriptive adverbs betray the impotence of so many writers these days)

**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE
ISLAMIC STATE OF AFGHANISTAN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

Afghan Foreign Minister Hedayat Amin Arsala addressed the 48th regular session of the UN General Assembly on 10/12/93. The following is from his address:

...I would like to focus the attention of this Assembly on my own country, Afghanistan. As all of you know, Afghanistan has suffered enormously within the past 15 years. I do not wish to go into extensive details on the scope of destruction that has taken place, but I would like to highlight a few points very briefly...

Almost the entire transportation, communication and power infrastructure in Afghanistan has either been wiped out or severely damaged. The agriculture system is in total disarray with the irrigation system destroyed, much livestock killed and agricultural credit and extension services totally defunct. Placement of millions of mines throughout the country prevents the revival of the agricultural sector. Forests are denuded and the environment spoiled. Attempts to provide health care, medicine, immunization, etc., are stymied by the destruction of so many hospitals and clinics. Mental health problems resulting from so many years of war and bombings have no relief. In addition, thousands upon thousands of amputees require artificial limbs. Thousands of schools are destroyed and many of our teachers and professors have been killed or exiled. Indeed, illiteracy has overtaken almost our entire population. A whole generation of Afghans has no experience of a normal life and no experience of education in any form. The other two urgent problems we have are both linked to the lack of jobs and the lack of economic alternatives within Afghanistan. These are problems of large numbers of weapons in private hands and of illicit drugs. To both of these I will return later.

Let me describe the plight of one individual, Abdul Rahim. The man escaped to Pakistan from the war in Afghanistan 9 years ago. He was newly married with one baby. During the years in Pakistan he had two more children. Two of his brothers were killed in battles and the 3rd died of disease untreated because of poor medical facilities. Of his widowed sisters-in-law he is responsible for two of them and their 5 children. Thus, as he returns to his village in Afghanistan he is the head of a family of 12 people. He finds that his parents who had refused to leave are no longer there. It will be some time before he learns of their fate. His home is reduced to a pile of rubble and charred beams as are those of his neighbors. The shops of the village are gone. The once-paved road that came almost to the village is an unrecognizable path of dust and rocks. There is no water, no electricity. Worse, there are no trees or source of wood and winter is increasing its shadow with each cold night. In his once productive fields lie burned tanks and odd metallic rubble. His cousins nervously talk of land mines - one of which killed an old neighbor the day before his return. His family is concerned about lack of flour, tea and sugar.

This person is just one example. There are millions of people like him in Afghanistan.

One of the most damaging legacies that Afghanistan has inherited from Soviet occupation and communist rule and from the long drawn-out war is a substantial breakup of our civil and military administration and the virtual collapse of our economic and financial institutions. In the past year the Gov't took substantial steps to correct the situation. Progress has been made in re-establishing central authority and in reviving public and private economic and financial institutions. Nonetheless, considerable work and much assistance will be required before we begin to overcome those shortcomings.

In addition, given the destruction that has taken place, we are in need of a massive reconstruction program which we are unable to undertake unless we are assisted by the int'l community. The General Assembly passed a resolution last year calling for reconstruction assistance to Afghanistan. Not much, however, has happened. A similar resolution will be presented to the Assembly this year. We hope that you will support it and that many can take part in making it a reality.

When we raise the question of assistance for reconstruction and revitalization of the economy, our request is gently dismissed with the reply that once security is established, Afghanistan will be helped. Granting that security is important for a full-fledged reconstruction program, I would suggest that a reasonable degree of peace and security does exist in large parts of Afghanistan. In these areas reconstruction is possible and, if started, could serve as a catalyst in revitalizing the entire Afghan economy. There are only a few areas where tensions exist and where there may be intermittent fighting. We should also bear in mind that it may not be possible to have full peace and security in the country unless we are able to start the process of reconstruction and to provide people with productive economic opportunities to make it attractive and indeed possible for them to give up their arms. The vicious cycle of security first then reconstruction or economic revival first and then security must be broken if we are to make any progress.

Another dimension of security is obviously political. To ensure that the entire Afghan nation participates in determining the future political structure of Afghanistan, we plan to hold elections within the course of the coming year. We have, therefore, requested that the UN help organize and supervise the election process....

One issue worth mentioning here has both regional and int'l implications: narcotic drugs. At the present time, the illicit cultivation, production, stocking, smuggling and trafficking of narcotic drugs are without a doubt critical problems that face humanity. Regrettably, one of the legacies of the long war is the transformation of some parts of our country into staging areas for illicit drug activity. This phenomenon, which is the result of the unavailability of alternative productive economic activities, is a source of great pain to us. The Islamic State of Afghanistan, despite its scarce resources, has undertaken serious measures in the struggle against illicit drugs. We will spare no efforts in combatting these illegal activities. However, we must not overlook the reality that Afghanistan, with its extremely limited means and massive economic and financial needs, is not in a position to effectively accomplish this task alone. Afghanistan needs urgent support from the int'l community to intensify the struggle against drug cultivation and trafficking.

Another area where we require cooperation is the question of land mines. Last year the Sec'y Gen'l's report brought to the attention of the world the fact that there are over 10m land mines in Afghanistan. It should also be mentioned that on average about 300 persons fall victim to land mines each month. The agricultural sector, the traditional base of the Afghan economy, will never be revived until these mines are cleared. We express our gratitude for the past and ongoing mine clearing programs of the UN and experts from other countries. However, there is urgent need for greater assistance by interested countries both in actual mine clearing operations and in training Afghan citizens so as to enable us to complete this task in as short a time as feasible....

We, the Afghans, want to reconstruct our country and to heal the wounds of the war that was imposed upon us. We look forward to a normal life where all our citizens will fully participate in the political, economic and social life of

the country without any prejudice and without discrimination based on ethnicity, religious sect, language or gender. Here, we consider it particularly important that Afghan women play an effective and positive role in the rebuilding of Afghanistan. We want to raise the standard of living of our people. We want to live in peace with all our neighbors and cooperate fully with them so that we can use the vast resources of our region to the maximum advantage of all our peoples. Indeed, we want Afghanistan to serve as a transit and trade center of the region. To this end, the Islamic State of Afghanistan intends to devise a reconstruction and development strategy for Afghanistan's internal needs but which also takes into account regional requirements.

We are distressed by the recent upheaval in Tajikistan. We have made every effort to ensure that tensions along the Tajik-Afghan border are reduced... We welcome the decision of the Tajik authorities to solve their internal political problems through negotiations so that the Tajik refugees now in Afghanistan can return to Tajikistan voluntarily, with confidence in security and honor in accordance with int'l norms. To this end we are planning to reach a trilateral agreement among Afghanistan, Tajikistan and the UNHCR.

The Islamic State of Afghanistan stands firm in support of human rights. This we consider not only an int'l commitment but also a religious conviction. The fact that after the collapse of the communist regime in Afghanistan and the takeover by the Mujahideen, no policy of revenge against the former regime members was pursued is a good indication of this commitment. It is true, however, that due to the massive number of weapons now in private hands in our country, some individual incidents of human rights violations have taken place, and skirmishes between different armed groups have regrettably led to the loss of innocent lives. The Islamic State of Afghanistan is taking measures to collect heavy arms from various armed groups. We seriously hope that these efforts will bear fruit in the not too distant future.

I also want to make it clear that having been the victim of terrorism ourselves, the Afghan nation opposes terrorism in any form or shape. We will never tolerate terrorism or allow Afghan territory to be used for such acts. Terrorism and the killing of innocent people is abhorrent to our religious beliefs and to our traditions...

The world is also witness to the fact that throughout the unequal war against the former Soviet Union, the Afghans at no point carried out any acts of terrorism against Soviet citizens or Soviet properties...

On our part, I would like to assure this organization and the int'l community from this rostrum that Afghanistan will be a full and cooperative partner in all constructive and collective efforts aimed at ensuring int'l peace, stability, progress, freedom and justice...

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INTERVIEW WITH AFGHAN FOREIGN MINISTER

Ralph H. Magnus, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA 93943
(408) 656-2521, Fax (408) 656-2949

Report of Interview, 14 October 1993

Hedayat Amin Arsala, Foreign Minister of the Islamic State of Afghanistan

Hedayat Amin Arsala, a former official of the World Bank, is the foreign minister of Afghanistan. I interviewed him on October 14 at his home in Washington. He has a long association with the United States and met his wife Betsy while teaching Dari to the Peace Corps volunteers in 1964. (Betsy is currently coordinating the Smithsonian Institution's series of lectures being held this fall in Washington). He was active in building support for the Afghan jihad in the West and eventually left his World Bank position to work full time as an adviser to Pir Ahmad Gailani and the Mahaz-i Islami (Islamic Front).

Mr. Arsala comes from Nangrahar province. Several of his cousins have been prominent in the jihad as supporters of the Hizb-i-Islami (Yunis Khales). These include Haji Abdul Qadir, the provincial amir of HIK and currently Governor of Nangrahar. Haji Din Mohammed, a commander and advisor to Yunis Khales and Haji Abdul Haq, the noted commander of HIK in Kabul province. Our meeting was at my request and at the suggestion of Dr. A.G. Ravan Farhadi, the ambassador of Afghanistan to the United Nations.

Dr. Farhadi had expressed his desire to have the United States take a greater interest in Afghanistan, believing that the stability and security of Afghanistan were necessary to secure the interests which the United States had deemed important in the region. Naturally, he felt that the government of President Burhanuddin Rabbani was the best choice for a stable and moderate Afghanistan. He mentioned that the public offer of asylum to Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman (made before his arrest) by prime minister Hekmatyar had not been an official decision of the Afghan government. It had been opposed by both himself as foreign minister and by President Rabbani.

President Rabbani has planned to come to the United Nations to give an address at the annual General Assembly meeting. He had been hoping to meet with President Clinton as well, but when this was not possible he went instead to Saudi Arabia. His speech had been read by Dr. Farhadi. I mentioned that I had learned from friends in the State Department that the failure of the visiting ambassadors (American, British, French and Australian) from Islamabad to meet President Rabbani during their visit to Kabul had been viewed negatively in Washington, he said that this visit had been arranged through the United Nations and that nobody from that office had mentioned that the ambassadors wanted to see President Rabbani. He had received the ambassadors along with two of the deputy foreign ministers and then was their host at a luncheon, as had been arranged in advance. Any reports that he (Arsala) had made meeting with the president (Rabbani) conditional with meeting also with the prime minister (Hekmatyar) were totally untrue. "You know (deputy foreign minister) Lafraje, you can ask him."

The foreign minister mentioned that the Afghan government is very interested in obtaining Turkish advisers for their military academy. He had mentioned this to Turkish Foreign Minister Citen at the United Nations, and would discuss it with him in November when he was to visit Ankara. Afghanistan had a longstanding relationship with Turkey in the field of military training, dating from the founding of the military academy in the reign of Amir Habibullah Khan. Some of these connections continued even after the Afghan government turned to the Soviets for military training in the 1950s, and some officers continued to be sent to Turkey for training. There were even some sent to the United States. I mentioned that there had been an Afghan officer at the Naval Postgraduate School in the early 1970s.

In reply to my question concerning the security situation in Kabul, he replied that there had been a recent deterioration due to fighting between Hizb-i-Wahdat and the Itehad of Professor Sayyaf. When I remarked about the fluidity of the shifting political alignments in Kabul, as shown by Dostam's shift from supporting Ahmad Shah Mas'ud to supporting Gulbeddin Hekmatyar. This was despite the fact that Hekmatyar's major issue last year in attacking the Kabul government was that Dostam was unacceptable as a former communist. Arsala said that the correct interpretation was that Dostam had shifted from supporting Mas'ud to neutrality, but this did not mean that he supported Hekmatyar. "These differences are not ideological, but ethnic in nature," was his opinion.

I broadened the question of the security situation to that of the government as a whole. "How did the government function? Did it really do anything?" Arsala said that the ministries were set up and functioning, but this did not mean that they anything like effective control

over the country. "How can they function without money," I asked. "Since taxes can't be collected, where does the government get money to function?" He replied that the provincial governments did get some taxes and fees, mainly from controlling the borders. It was worse for the central government, which has to depend on borrowing from the central bank (Da Afghanistan Bank) for 80% of its needs. I mentioned that I had heard that this just meant that the Russians, who still printed Afghan currency in Moscow, just printed more money without any backing allowing them to further interfere in Afghanistan. I mentioned that I had learned from an official in the Pakistani prime minister's office that the Russians were using this money to back General Dostam. Foreign Minister Arsala said that this was so, but the Russians had sent Afghan currency not only to Dostam but to other groups as well. "Everyone is getting outside financing: from the Russians, Iranians, Pakistanis, Americans, etc..... This defeats all political efforts for peace. Everyone has their own separate army."

I asked if this was why he wanted Turkish troops to rebuild the Afghan army. "This desire for Turkish instructors is not to deal with the immediate security situation, but rather a long-term effort in military education. Afghanistan needs national army and not a Panjshiri army, a Badakhshan army, and so forth." Such an army has to be non-political and based upon youth. When I asked how this could be accomplished without the central government having control of the country, he said that conscription had been reinstated and those classes that had not served were being called up. "Is the defense ministry council effectively functioning?" I asked. "I never understood how these councils (for supervision of the defense and interior ministries as agreed to at the Jalalabad meeting in June) were to function. They are based on politics and not on special knowledge. It would be proper to have a broad supervisory council is the members were chosen on the basis of their specialized knowledge," was his reply.

Foreign Minister Arsala then returned to his major theme, that the United States should be involved politically and economically in Afghanistan. The US has the power and influence on Afghanistan's neighbors and potential donors, and unless it gets involved the current path of division and conflict will only continue. The present government doesn't respond to the will and needs of the Afghan people. It is only a transition. The lack of a central government shows up in commerce, the army, security, economic and social policies. The result of this has been to create a lack of security on our borders and contribute to regional instability...as in Tajikistan. But this is not confined to Tajikistan: "The Indian foreign minister protested to me about the involvement of Afghans in Kashmir. What could I say, they had been caught there? This is only natural when Afghanistan has no reconstruction or stability, but only arms and poverty." Thus internal instability added to the instability of the entire region, not just in Tajikistan. The lack of a central government means that there is no means to control the radical Arabs. They can come and go as they please." They are the ones who killed the four United Nations relief workers in Nangrahar, thus setting back local efforts to rebuild the province."

When I asked if he had discussed this with American officials, he mentioned that he had discussed them with Peter Tarnoff, Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs, who had come to the Afghan embassy in Washington. In general, the United States must realize that the cost of doing something is going to be much less than doing nothing...which is the current policy. He added that the American Embassy could operate in Kabul despite the security situation, which had not stopped Pakistan, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Iran and India. Indonesia was opening its embassy in a few days.

I asked what he thought of Iranian policy in Afghanistan? He replied that initially they had attempted to influence Afghan politics, but he felt that they had since decided that Afghan politics was too tough a nut to crack and they had better not get overly involved. "Perhaps they realize that as long as there is instability in Afghanistan there is danger of it spreading to Iran. Iran can get nothing out of this. It will only give the Russians an excuse for further involvement on Iran's borders, which Iran wishes to avoid at all costs."

"If the Russians continue attacks on our side of the border, this will only encourage the radicals and militants against Russia and the present regimes in Central Asia. Hekmatyar is bidding for radical support, while Rabbani wants this problem solved. There is no certainty about a summit meeting of Central Asia heads of state, but there will be bilateral meeting at least. We wish to arrange a visit of President Rabbani to Dushanbe. I tried to get the Dushanbe government to get down and talk with their opposition. We need to reduce tensions, allow for the return of refugees and restore normal relations. They need to have a dialogue and haven't done so as yet. The only way to get this is to provide a gain from good relations. We want a two-track policy towards the Tajikistan problem: 1) Dushanbe should talk to their opposition, so that opponents in Afghanistan could talk as well; 2) Tensions should be reduced on the border and there must be no attacks at all on our side". This only, in his

opinion, encourages radicals in Afghanistan and provides them with political gain. "Dostam and the Uzbekistan government are encouraging the conflict by aiding the opposition. This is a way to get at a Tajik government in Dushanbe and the Tajik ethnic group in Uzbekistan. They have a lot of territorial problems and are worried about potential Tajik claims on Samarkand, etc." The Uzbeks do not have to depend on the Russian army, they are big enough to come up with an army of their own, he added.

We talked about my visit last year in Jalalabad with his cousin Haji Abdul Qadir, the governor of Nangarhar province. He mentioned that they were having some troubles this year in Nangarhar stemming from the assassination of Commander Shomali Khan. This caused trouble between the Nangarhar Shura and the Ahmadzai tribe. There was also some fighting in Sarobi between forces of the *Hizb-i-Islami* and the local Sarobi Shura.

Mr. Arsala mentioned that he was going to visit Turkey next month, but was thinking that he might go first to Tashkent. He would try to make an agreement with Turkey on the sending of military instructors to the Kabul military academy. I mentioned that Uzbekistan should see that it was in its interest to work for stability in Afghanistan, which could provide them with their best route to the sea through Pakistan. Otherwise they would perpetuate their dependence on Russia or become dependent on Iran as an outlet. They should realize that Dostam might be useful in the short term, but he had no chance or ruling or bringing stability to Afghanistan. He replied, "Yes, I brought up this point to President Karimov and he seemed to take it to heart."

As I was leaving (it was nearly midnight), Mr. Arsala stopped me to summarize again his argument on what should be done by the United States and other friendly governments. The most important point was to realize that there was enough stability in many parts of the country to begin rebuilding. Certainly, there were areas of instability and insecurity and, unfortunately, Kabul was the prime example. But to change this you have to start where there is security. This would not only help that particular area but would benefit the entire country. You can't have security without a revived economy. This could have started a year ago, for example, in Jalalabad. For stability you need to get people interested in something besides carrying guns and killing. To do this we need a proper reconstruction plan to announce to the people to give them an incentive. During the jihad the U.S. made the mistake feeling all it needed to do was to get help to the fighters. But it should have looked as well to the longer term to help the establishment of a favorable political system. We need a responsible financial policy and the accountability of public funds. Even now the right people could be helped; they can't do it alone. This has to be done to dry up the supply and financing of the radicals.



Wall painting from the mosque in Qala-i-Haji Sahib, north of Kabul

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A/c No. (US\$) 590, 161.1

LACK OF AID.. cont. from p. 15

struction wages, many returnees have trouble adjusting to a land where food and jobs are in short supply.

"I cannot afford food anymore," cried Fatima, 45, who recently took her malnourished 8-month-old granddaughter to Herat's hospital.

The eventual return of 500,000 more refugees to the Herat district will further strain social services. Already, four-fifths of the people lack access to safe drinking water, making cholera outbreaks routine.

Perhaps the most tragic burden awaiting Afghan refugees is the estimated 10 million land mines that form a carpet of terror in the country.

In the province of Herat, 1,400 children have lost limbs to mine explosions; the International Committee of the Red Cross has been able to supply prosthetic limbs for only 25.

TENDER NOTICE

The Ministry of Communications of the Islamic State of Afghanistan is in need of printing its Postal Tickets.

Local institutions as well as foreign companies willing to print the same on the basis of contract may submit their offers CIF Kabul Airport with a validity of 6 months till Mizan 24, 1372 HS (Oct. 16, 1993), which is the latest day for the accepting of offer and bidding to the Foreign Supply and Procurement of the said Ministry.

List of technical specification can be seen and bid bonds are required. 10 (2-2)

OCTOBER 23, 1993

The Washington Times

THE REUTERS REPORT ON THE PROGRESS [or lack of progress] ON THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION.
Reported by William Reeve, dated 9/29/93.

Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani will not unveil a new interim constitution until hearing the complaints of minority Shi'ite Moslem factions, according to his spokesman.

A constitution commission set up by Rabbani earlier this month and comprising some 50 members finished work on Monday on a draft document. But the two main Shi'ite groups, Hezb-i-Wahdat & Harakat-i-Islami, boycotted the talks, complaining their wishes had been ignored.

Presidential spokesman Abdul Aziz Morad said late on Tuesday: "Before announcing the new interim constitution, Pres. Rabbani will listen to their complaints. If the president does not find the draft document acceptable, he will ask another group to study it."

Abdul Ali Mazari, one of the main Wahdat leaders, has called the proposed constitution "a step on the way to divide & destroy" the war-ravaged country. "The gov't should not institute such a document," he said in an interview. With Harakat-i-Islami, Mazari wants the Shi'ite Jafari law to be included. [And, according to Radio Tehran, they were horrified to learn that the new document did not guarantee education for women!]

Support for the Shi'ites was also voiced by Northern Afghanistan's powerful warlord, Gen. Abdul Rashed Dostum, whose switch of sides early last year greatly helped the mujahideen guerrilla parties to take power in Kabul after 14 years of civil war.

A senior member of the constitution commission, Construction Minister Ahmad Shah Amadzai, disagrees with referring the draft constitution to any other group if Rabbani feels it is not acceptable. "No complaints will be discussed by any other commission. All complaints should be discussed by parliament which is due to be elected at the same time as the new president," he said.

An accord signed by all Afghan parties last March in Islamabad said these elections must be held within 9 months, but no plans have yet been made. The primary aim of the interim constitution will be to spell out the authority of the president & the prime minister, Afghan sources said. Rabbani & Hekmatyar lead the main rival factions - Jamiat-e-Islami & Hezb-e-Islami.

This constitution commission was formed partly because of the election commission's failure to decide on how or when to hold the first Afghan elections since the mujahideen guerrilla parties took over early last year from the former Soviet-backed communist gov't.



*Tens of thousands
of Tajik refugees braved
the icy waters of the Amu
Darya river to reach
safety in Afghanistan.*

PHOTO: UNHCR / A. JAMA

See p. 11 for reports
on the Afghan-Tajik
border problem.

**From the August 1993 issue
of REFUGEES:**

UNHCR STRENGTHENS SECURITY FOR STAFF IN THE FIELD

On the afternoon of February 1, Reinout Wanrooy, a UNHCR staff member working in Afghanistan, was traveling on the road from Peshawar to Jalalabad along with two U.N. colleagues and two Afghan drivers. As they neared Jalalabad, three unidentified gunmen in a blue pick-up overtook them and started shooting at the two clearly marked U.N. vehicles. After forcing the U.N. cars to a halt, the gunmen jumped out and opened fire on their victims at point-blank range. Three men died instantly, while one of the Afghan drivers, fatally wounded, died later in hospital. Reinout Wanrooy managed to escape unscathed by jumping from the car and running as fast as he could, dodging a hail of gunfire. After the gunmen left, Wanrooy emerged from the bushes where he was hiding and flagged down an International Committee of the Red Cross vehicle for help.

This is but one of a series of chilling security incidents involving UNHCR staff members in recent months. The incidents include death threats, robberies (personal belongings, equipment, vehicles), occupation of offices by political groups or refugees, kidnappings, arrests by local authorities, physical assaults, rape and murder.

Field work for U.N. staff in many parts of the world has become downright dangerous. In 1992, an average of one staffer involved in U.N. activities was killed each month. By mid-1993, the figure had climbed to one a week.

Among all civilian U.N. agencies, UNHCR is perhaps the most exposed to danger. Since its involvement in northern Iraq in April 1991, UNHCR has been increasingly called upon to act in the world's most dangerous trouble spots: Kenya, Somalia, Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Sri Lanka and, of course, former Yugoslavia. • • •

With Yugoslavia, UNHCR quickly recognized its thinking on security matters was outdated. In September 1992, UNHCR hired Jim Vale, a security consultant with a military background. Vale later became the first UNHCR field security officer. His first mission was to former Yugoslavia where he briefed the staff on basic security precautions and made concrete recommendations such as placing sandbags in front of office windows.

Vale also helped design a pocket-sized UNHCR security "aide memoire" that staff in the field can carry with them at all times. The handbook covers subjects ranging from personal security to radio and convoy procedures, evacuation, counter ambush and crowd control procedures, first aid, navigation and survival techniques, self defense and rules to follow when confronted with mines and explosives.

The advice is simple, concrete and to the point. Some samples: "Don't become emotionally involved with people you are trying to help. Never promise assistance that you cannot deliver. If stopped by armed aggressors, don't resist, act docile but stay alert, avoid eye contact... If fired upon get out of vehicle opposite the side of the shooting, move out of the line of fire, take your pack and radio, scatter but don't separate. Always reverse into parking spaces..."

At the same time, UNHCR has created an entirely new security structure that becomes operational this summer. A security coordinator has been hired at the senior level, as well as two field security officers based in Geneva. Each of them will supervise security advisers based in risk-prone field locations. The novelty of this approach is that all of these security advisers, including the senior coordinator, have extensive security backgrounds. • • •

"The days of opening an office, operating for months and then finding out that you need a security plan are over," Vale said. "Security will now become an integral part of any UNHCR office from the very beginning."

Staff are going to be taught new techniques like evasive driving, sur-

vival and navigation techniques, first aid and even self-defense.

Vale is particularly worried about the risk of rape for female staff and UNHCR is debating whether it is appropriate to teach them self-defense in this respect. "If you're going to use self-defense you had better be sure you're going to win," he said. "Because if you don't, the alternative is you might get killed. And how can self-defense help you if you're the victim of a gang-rape?"

No options are being left unexplored for the protection of staff, including the possibility of using a walking stick or even MACE, the paralysing spray that is supposed to ward off attackers.

Drawing on the experience of former Yugoslavia, stockpiling of equipment is another area where UNHCR recognizes progress must be made. To avoid shortages of life-saving items, UNHCR is looking into ways of stockpiling things like communications equipment, flak jackets, armored vehicles, alarm systems, car parts, whistles, medical kits and generators.

The new UNHCR thinking on security also includes close coordination with other U.N. agencies, particularly the office of the U.N. Security Coordinator who has overall responsibility for the U.N. system, as well as with NGOs. Ideally, the cost of deploying security advisers in danger zones should be shared among all the agencies concerned to avoid overlapping and unnecessary expenditures. So far, UNHCR, UNICEF and UNDP have been developing their own security arrangements.

"Although we're all going in the same direction, we're doing it our own separate ways," Vale said. "It is important that we pool our efforts. War against the U.N. is going to become a theme of despots in the future. The U.N. will continue to be blamed and manipulated and used as a pawn by all sides. Security will have to become professionalized at all levels. That is why security has become the flavor of the month, so to speak. And in this new ball game, UNHCR is leading the way."

SYLVIE GIRARD

MEDICS

From a suite overlooking Century Boulevard, in the shadow of Los Angeles International Airport, the IMC has sent hundreds of medical personnel like Franklin to war-ravaged countries since 1984, beginning with Afghanistan after the Soviet invasion.

Despite the danger, doctors, nurses and other medical personnel have left the relative safety of American hospitals and headed off to nations such as Angola, Afghanistan and Cambodia. Most simply want to help the victims of war-ravaged nations. Others want to see the world.

Whatever their reasons, these medical workers find themselves faced with the seemingly impossible: trying to save lives and heal broken bodies while surrounded by mass destruction and bloodshed.

But providing much-needed medical care to war victims is only part of IMC's mission. The medical personnel and administrators also have established public health-care programs that focus on immunization and health education, and in some countries a chain of health clinics. To ensure that these programs will outlive IMC's stay in any country, the organization also trains local doctors and health-care practitioners.

Over the years, the organization has sent nearly 350 doctors, 166 nurses and many physician assistants and other medical personnel to war-torn nations. The program also sends public-health workers, who run the health education components of the program, and logistics specialists, who oversee the day-to-day operation of the program, such as transportation, room and board. Currently, IMC has about 60 people working abroad.

"They have developed a particular niche for themselves," said Andrew Natsios, a former assistant administrator with the U.S. Agency for International Development and current vice president of World Vision. "There are very few private voluntary organizations that will do this kind of work. . . . It's very risky business."

But IMC is no stranger to danger. In 1984, Dr. Robert R. Simon, then an associate professor of medicine for the Division of Emergency Medicine at UCLA, read an article about the impact of the Soviet invasion on the health-care system in Afghanistan.

"Where there were 1,800 doctors before the war, only 200 remained," said Simon, who is now chief of emergency services at Cook County Hospital in Chicago. The rest of the doctors had been either executed, imprisoned or exiled.

Outraged at the deaths and by the fact that "the world wasn't responding," Simon decided to go to Afghanistan.

"The rural health-care system and hospitals had been destroyed," Simon said. "It was basically done to force people to leave the country, to depopulate—and it worked. One third of the entire population went into refugee camps."



'Here, you have all this medical/legal garbage purely to make lawyers rich . . . You go overseas and you just practice real medicine.'—Dr. Robert R. Simon

Using his own funds and other private donations, Simon created IMC after several well-established relief agencies told him they could not oversee a clinic he set up on his visit to Afghanistan.

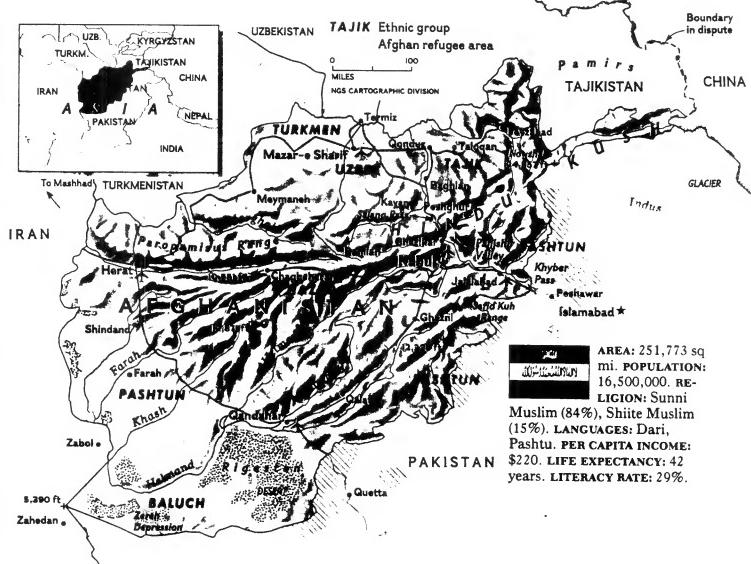
"The charters of most international relief organizations will not let them work in places where the governments don't want them to be," he said.

IMC assists those most in need of medical care and training—whether the government wants them there or not. It is a private, non-profit organization that receives funding from individuals, corporations and foundations, as well as from the USAID, the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance, the World Health Organization and the European Community.

There are many reasons why IMC medical personnel and administrators shun the advice of well-meaning friends and family and voluntarily place themselves in a war zone, but money is not one of them, said Ken Ferber, IMC communications manager. Those who sign up for short-term stints—one to two months—receive no compensation. The organization pays their air fare to the country and their room and board. Those who sign up for longer programs, at least six months, receive only a small stipend.

LOS ANGELES TIMES

9/27/93



CHRONOLOGY

From the September 1993 ACBAR News Summary #9: (No dates were given)

- The US Ambassador to Pakistan along with Islamabad Ambassadors and High Commissioners of Australia, United Kingdom, Sweden, Canada, Germany & the EEC visited Kabul to examine the situation with a view to reopening their missions in Kabul.
- The Afghan Prime Minister recently offered the position of Defense Minister to Ismael Khan, Governor of Herat. (See related article, p. 23.)
- Indonesia pledged \$5m to Afghanistan.

- Rabbani constituted a 45-member commission, headed by Maulavi Moh'd Nabi Mohammadi, to draft an interim constitution. (See 9/28)

9/6 - PT - Pakistan reported that some drug barons in the tribal areas have gone into hiding in Afghanistan to avoid being arrested & possibly extradited to the US. "The sources revealed that some notable Afghan personalities have given refuge to drug lords in Afghanistan."

- Rival groups in Kabul signed another ceasefire.

9/8 - Bulletin du CEREDAF #94: Gul-buddin Hekmatyar attended the ceremony to reopen Kabul University which has been closed for the past fifteen months.

9/9 - PT - According to UNHCR, over 1.6m Afghan refugees from Pakistan have been repatriated as of the end of August.

- The Deputy Gov. of Jalalabad, Cdr. Shazmali Khan, 35, of Mahaz-i-Milli Afghanistan, was assassinated yesterday in Jalalabad. He was recently appointed Police Chief of Afghanistan by Hekmatyar. The alleged attackers belonged to Hezb/- Khalis (See related article on p. 7.)

9/10 - PT - Russian Foreign Minister Kozyrev arrived in Kabul & met with Hekmatyar to discuss prisoner releases & Afghan-Tajik border issues. Hekmatyar supposedly promised to release some former Soviet POWs in return for the Russians providing some mine-sweeping experts & equipment to clear mines in Afghanistan. Hekmatyar said he wanted to release the POWs without any conditions, but that he couldn't do so in the face of the presence of Russian troops on the Afghan-Tajik border. Both parties expressed their desire to improve mutual relations.

9/18 - NYT - Iran has assured the UNHCR that the 2.2m Afghan refugees still in Iran will be repatriated voluntarily (see p.18).

9/24 - LAT - Rocket exchanges between rival Shiite & Sunni Muslim factions in Kabul killed 16 people & injured 55 during the past 24 hours.

9/28 - NYT - Afghan leaders approved an interim constitution to carry the country through elections next year. According to Radio Kabul, the constitution was approved after 5 days of bickering, particularly over whether the Shiite minority would receive constitutional protection.*

9/30 - PT - From 9/11-9/17, 191 Afghan refugees arrived in Pakistan from Kabul. During the same period, UNHCR undertook a case-by-case medical study of 35 disabled Afghan refugees in Tehran who wish to repatriate.

The October Bulletin du CEREDAF #94 reports that an agreement for a preliminary study for the construction of a railroad line from Ashkabad-Herat-Kandahar-Quetta-Karachi was signed on 8/24 in Islamabad.

10/13 - PT - Fierce fighting in & around Sarobi has left over 200 dead or wounded. (See p. 7.)

10/12 - Afghan Foreign Minister Hedayat Amin Arsala addressed the UNGA. (Excerpts from his speech appear on p.31.)

* See p. 36.

10/14 - PT - At the UN, Amin Ar-sala urged India & Pakistan to resolve the Kashmir dispute.
- Pakistan has asked Saudi Arabia, Iran & Turkey to join it in sending a delegation to Kabul to reconcile the warring factions.

10/16 - PT - UN sources said that as many as 77,102 Afghan refugee families have surrendered their passbooks to UNHCR in Quetta. Many of them are believed to have returned to Afghanistan. Of the 3m refugees that were in Pakistan, about 1m were in Baluchistan.

10/17 - PT - The OIC is sending a peace delegation to Kabul to try to end the current factional clashes.

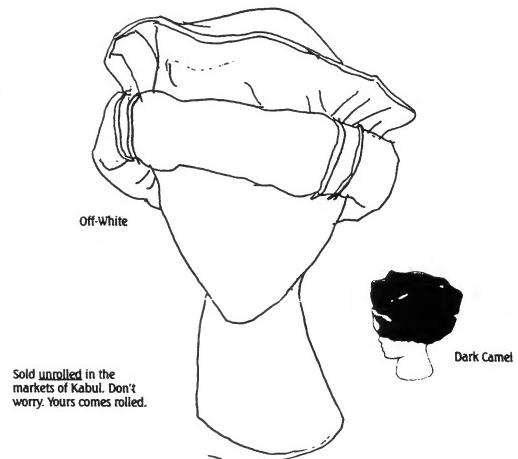
10/21 - PT - The Kabul-Jalalabad highway, blocked two weeks ago, has been reopened. Maulavi Haqqani & the jihad shoora of Ningarhar have brokered a 10-day cease-fire.
- Pakistan welcomed reports that fighting in Kabul had abated, but is seriously concerned that the fighting is still heavy in Sarobi.

10/24 - Asbury Park Press - Renewed fighting just outside Kabul has left 21 people dead and 50 wounded. Ittehad-e-Islami, allied with Rabbani, clashed with a pro-Iranian Shiite group.

The Constitution (see 9/28) was apparently withdrawn. See p. 36 for a Reuters report on the particulars.

From the J. Peterman Catalogue:

Afghan Rebel Hat.



You're falling through history's funnel, through the Khyber Pass, through the doorway to everything imaginable: silks, cinnamon-skinned bodies, corpulent diamonds, white tiger skins, opium, empires.

Darius of Persia couldn't resist it. He tried to squeeze through in the 5th century B.C. Later, Alexander the Great sent his generals Hephaestion and Perdiccas. Ranjit Singh came later. Then the British. Then the Russians. Each failed.

The Khyber Pass, this beguiling entrance to all mankind's little cravings, has been so crowded, at times, with miscellaneous conquerors, expeditions, "military advisors", that to save your place in line you would have to take a number.

Something always goes wrong, despite the latest tanks, or the biggest elephants. Always the same thing... up there, up in the hills and along the ridges are those annoying "rebels" and their Afghan hats.

Each conqueror, finally, had to pack up, go home. Imagine the adroit explanations to the finance committees, and to the widows.

So, over the centuries, the Afghan "rebel" hat has become a symbol: "don't step on me." But it has also remained a hat. You can't outwit the weather wearing a symbol.

As a hat it has become, in the course of a few thousand years, simple and perfect, everything unneeded removed. There is only one size. Buy one in the markets of Kabul and they quickly fit it to you by stretching it a bit with their hands. You can do the same.

Pure karakul wool: warm, as it must be, when the weather is cold, cool when the weather is warm.

Comfortable. Sensible. Handsome. Different. And heroic.

Equally distinguished on men or women. Two colors: Off-White or Dark Camel. Please specify.

Price: \$21.

نامه الموسى						
ج						
دسمبر ۱۹۹۳-۱۹۹۴						
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١٨	١٩	٢٠	٢١	٢٢	٢٣	٢٤
٢٥	٢٦	٢٧	٢٨	٢٩	٣٠	١

Afghan town in grip of fierce fighting: 200 killed

KABUL, Oct. 12: Intense fighting with tanks and multiple rocket-launchers between mujahideen factions in a town east of Kabul has left more than 200 dead or wounded, official sources said Tuesday.

The fighting, which started late Sunday and has continued unabated, is between a local commander who dominates the town of Sarobi, and the combined forces of the shura of mujahideen council of Jalalabad, the provincial capital 100 kilometres (60 miles) to the east near the Paki-

stan border.

The Jalalabad shura requested the assistance of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to evacuate wounded from Sarobi, said Andreas Pfiffner, deputy head of the Kabul ICRC delegation.

"We sent a three-jeep Red Cross convoy in the direction of Sarobi this morning which was supposed to collect the wounded and return to Jalalabad," Pfiffner said.

Pfiffner said one of the handful of wounded evacuated spoke of seeing 50 to 70 injured still lying

in the town bazaar.

The ICRC deputy commented that the fighting raged in the bazaar of the southern end of Sarobi, where tanks from the Jalalabad shura were reported to be trying to breach the defences of the local commander, Zardad.

Zardad, backed by salvos from multi-barrel rocket launchers, is understood to have forced the Jalalabad forces out of Sarobi.

It is not clear why the fighting started but there is a blood-feud between Zardad and the Jalalabad shura, caused by the killing of

Travel troubles on way to Kabul

MAZAR-I-SHARIFF (Afghanistan), Oct. 18: A small teenager with a masked face and a nervous stutter, clutching a Kalashnikov assault rifle more than half his height, suddenly appeared in the middle of the strategic highway linking Mazar-i-Sharif and Kabul.

Stopping vehicles approaching from both directions he ordered the drivers to pay what is called in Afghanistan a "right of passage"—a kind of unofficial poll-tax, but is actually no more than highway robbery.

The youthful tax gatherer imposed a nominal but fixed amount on vehicles depending on the number of passengers, the amount of cargo transported, and perhaps most importantly of all—the ethnic group to which the driver belonged.

Pushkins, whose native tribal lands are far to the south, paid the maximum tax, Tajiks, geographic kinsmen to Uzbeks, half this amount and Uzbeks went free of charge.

The tax-collector needless to say, was an Uzbek.

The drivers obeyed, as usual,

without showing any kind of resistance; on the contrary they stretched their hands wide and smiled with helpless resignation.

But this was not to turn out a profitable day for the youth, as from one of the vehicles there emerged a massive Uzbek, huge moustache bristling, who descended on the highwayman and grabbed him by the scuff of his neck, causing him to drop his rifle.

He then beat the would-be bandit.

Most of those watching were surprised, but one advanced the explanation that the man doing the beating was the youth's commanding officer.

The boy's mistake: He tried to be a freelance thief. He didn't get the permission of his commanding officer.

The overland journey from Mazar-i-Sharif to Kabul takes a minimum 12 hours, depending on the number of hold-ups, but the wise traveller never anticipates when he will arrive.

On his trip there were more than 120 stoppages, most of which

were between Mazar and the impressive 2.7 kilometre (1.5 mile)-long Salang Tunnel.

This sector of the northern highway is mostly controlled by troops loyal to the Uzbek ex-communist militia warlord General Abdul Rashid Dostam, who now heads a front called the National Islamic Movement of Afghanistan.

In Mazar-i-Sharif banners hung in the street proclaimed Junibish's responsibility to defend Islam, democracy, peace, the honour and dignity of the people and the integrity of Afghanistan.

Travellers could be forgiven for wondering which was harder, upholding the noble aims stated on the banners or protecting people using the roads.

In one of the worst incidents during the trip, an officer at a military checkpoint hit the driver with a rifle, cutting his face and closing one eye.

The officer wanted to siphon some petrol from the car, but the driver protested saying just a day ago he had given the officer's commander 10 litres (2.5 gallons) of fuel. —AFP. 10/19

Zardad's cousin, the deposed deputy leader of the Jalalabad shura, some five weeks ago.

Both Zardad and his deceased cousin Shamali Khan, belong to the Kuchi Almudzai Pushtun clan, which has a stronghold just north of Sarobi around the vicinity of the Naghlu hydroelectric dam, which supplies Kabul with much of its electricity.

Zardad's Naghlu base was bombed by three sorties of defence minister jets Tuesday, diplomatic sources reported.

Tanks and troops of the defence ministry were also reported moving on the Naghlu area from the north, by way of the Tagab valley, and eastwards along the national highway from Kabul.

Although Zardad belongs to Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's Hezb-i-Islami faction, his allegiance is said to be based more on convenience than obedience.

One of Zardad's most daring stunts was the reported hijacking of two brand-new Toyota land-cruisers that President Burhanuddin Rabbani was having driven from Jalalabad to Kabul.

Rabbani is said to have complained to Hekmatyar, who offered Zardad one of his own vehicles in return for the president's two new jeeps. Zardad kept all three vehicles.

The highway between Jalalabad and Kabul, the major lifeline between Afghanistan and the outside world, remains cut, casting fear among Kabul residents about how they will survive the coming winter if necessary supplies of food and fuel are blockaded.—AFP.

10/13

From:
THE PAKISTAN TIMES

From another Catalogue:
[We'll take two!]

**Cozy Afghans
To Warm
Those
Winter
Nights**



Radek Sikorski reports

"MARASOON MENTAL HOSPITAL: The carrying of arms is prohibited" proclaimed a placard above the entrance gate. A young soldier with a machine gun slung across his shoulder escorted me inside — it was the first hint that the rules are not obeyed here. We were in Kabul's eastern suburbs and the hospital consisted of several large mud houses around a water pump, at which the inmates poured water into tin buckets. When the hospital came under fire recently, inmates sunned themselves while rockets fell about, and some, oblivious to the fighting, wandered out into the streets. Only a few dozen of the 160 survived.

Inside one of the mud houses, an old woman squatted on the floor of a room filled with rags, sewing, indifferent to the insects which crawled on her face. Her name was Kando, she was from Logar province, and she thought she was about 50, but was not exactly sure. Her diet consisted of bread, tea, sugar and occasionally some bones. She seemed perfectly lucid.

"It is worse at night when soldiers come with guns and take away the young girls to rape them," she said when the guards had absented themselves for a few minutes. "I threw stones at them while they did it and told them that it's as if they were doing it to their mother or sister, but they wouldn't listen. You should put them in jail and shoot them."

I spoke to one of the young girls, whose name was Meher. She was 16, from Charikar, north of Kabul. Her pretty face was wrinkled and tired, prematurely aged. "Men come here at night and beat me up with their guns. One night recently 20 of them came from the nearby posts. I tell them I don't want a husband, I don't want to marry, but they don't listen." Mindful of the guards who were again lingering in the vicinity, she remained vague. Did any family ever visit her? "My father comes every few days but I am afraid to tell him anything."

At last, I managed to talk to one of the women alone, without any guards present. She was called Shakila, claimed to be 15, and had deformed hips and a broken nose. She spoke in rough Persian, pointing in the general direction of the Mujahidin as she spoke. "These sons of bitches", she said, "take us from our rooms and rape us. Sometimes five men sometimes more. This morning one man came and raped me, raped me, raped me. Brothe God is my witness that I am not lying. Eve night and every day they come, those bastards! My stomach hurts but we have no medicine. fell down when I drank water this morning. At that moment the first girl, Meher, appeared in the window and, encouraged by her friend's frankness and the absence of guards, confided that she, too, had been raped repeatedly.

This is a commonplace story in the lawlessness of Kabul. I notified the local branch of Médecins sans Frontières, where the

doctors said that they would try to move the vulnerable patients to another location. But the chances that the guilty might be apprehended and punished are close to nil. No authority exists to enforce the law; those coming to the rescue might themselves be in danger. "Why are they going in there?" one of the patients who lingered about the gatehouse asked my taxi driver while I was inside with my Afghan interpreter. "Do they want to be beaten and raped?"

PEOPLE ARE NOT the only ones that suffer. When one of the young fighters from the faction which controls the Kabul zoo points a Kalashnikov at one of the two remaining monkeys, it stands to attention and salutes, the Soviet way. Other animals are less playful. The white bear is smirking from three bullet wounds, the vulture is limping after a mortar exploded near its cage and shrapnel hit its leg. The deer and the antelopes have been eaten a long time ago. Rumour has it that during one of the numerous battles for the zoo, one soldier mistook the elephant for a tank and tore it to shreds with a grenade. The animals have the misfortune of occupying the frontline where the main factions are battling for control of Kabul. Four years after the Soviet withdrawal, and more than a year since the collapse of the communist regime, Kabul hardly looks like a city celebrating a triumph.

It should do. The victory which the Afghans, together with their American backers, won over the Soviet Union is only seen in its proper proportions if we imagine the Vietcong not only forcing an American withdrawal from Indochina, but precipitating the break-up of the United States as a superpower and a nation state. The tens of billions of dollars which the Soviet Union lost fighting the war during the Eighties and the \$300 million per month which the Afghan communist regime received after Soviet combat troops were withdrawn in February 1989 were arguably key catalysts of the Soviet collapse.

The departure of Soviet diplomats from Kabul in August last year was more humiliating than anything inflicted on American personnel in Saigon or Phnom Penh. One of the planes sent to pick them up was promptly hit by a rocket and exploded in a fireball. The diplomats and their families spent a night under fire on the floor of the airport's departure hall before another plane arrived to take them to safety.

▲ The tail section of the destroyed plane — with a huge red flag — still litters the taxiway.

The looted Soviet embassy is another monument to disaster. Rockets have blown holes in the concrete perimeter fence, bullets have cracked the armoured glass in guardposts, fires have swept the compound. The embassy was like a small town, with a dozen blocks of flats and everything needed for self-sufficiency: supermarkets, a hospital and a sports ground. An eerie silence now reigns over it. The huge gates are firmly shut and

booby-trapped. The compound is mined to prevent further plunder, but one can appreciate the sight from the top of a nearby tower block: Volgas and Ladas stacked up as if in a car cemetery, concrete skeletons painted with soot, acres of broken glass, cratered. You could hardly have more tangible proof of defeat.

Even taking a taxi is other-worldly here. I got in one — a mongrel, with a Citroën dashboard, the body of an old Nissan and an engine that sounded as if it had come from a T34 tank — which was driven by a clean-shaven man who kept losing his way. Until 18 months before, he confessed in Russian, he had been a colonel in the Afghan communist army, and had spent six years at the Frunze military academy in the Soviet Union. He had been the military commander of the Logar province in 1989 — right about the time that I passed through, at night, driving in a Jeep across a stretch of desert, afraid of ambushes. I tried to imagine how our conversation would have gone if he had captured me then. Now he made me think of a pitiful Russian count driving a taxi in Paris after the Bolshevik coup. He was not even a good driver. I took perverse pleasure in giving him a generous tip.

TO THE AFGHANS, however, the euphoria of victory has long worn off. According to rough estimates by the International Committee of the Red Cross, about 20,000 people were killed and 100,000 wounded in Kabul in the past year. Hundreds die every month from the millions of mines that the Soviet Union left behind and which Russia shows no sign of wanting to take back — according to the now familiar principle of claiming the Soviet Union's assets but not accepting its liabilities. The capital is divided into zones of control much like Beirut used to be, and many quarters look like Beirut, too. Even on quiet days, people die by the dozen. On one otherwise quiet day, my taxi was shot at, and twice commandeered to ferry wounded to hospitals.

Rubbish piles up in Kabul's streets and disease is rampant. The city has electricity and running water for only a few hours a week. The last telephone call out of the country was made two months ago. Nobody eats fruit and vegetables from the bazaars for fear of poisoning. Government media have shown boys belonging to the Shia Hezbollah faction apparently caught with syringes, reportedly trying to inject poison into watermelons and cucumbers. In restaurants, it is perfectly acceptable to ask your waiter to taste your tomato salad before eating. It is impossible to establish whether the poisonings really happen or whether an impotent government is just trying to shift on to a rival faction the blame for epidemics it cannot check. Rumours abound. The factions are about to make a deal; no, a confrontation is imminent and rocketing will soon start in earnest.

— The war had upset Afghanistan's fragile balance and it will take years to re-establish

it. Afghan politics is hideously complicated, with ethnic and linguistic divisions cutting across those of clan, money, birth and religion, but the contest for power has lately coalesced between two dominant personalities: the Tajik war hero Ahmed Shah Masood, and Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, the Pashtun prime minister.

No Afghan politician is an angel, to say the least. Even the generally moderate Ahmed Shah Masood, the hero of the Panjshir valley, and now the master of the greater part of Kabul, recently authorised air strikes against targets in densely populated areas. From his guerrilla experience, he was fully aware of the likelihood of the bombs hitting civilians rather than his armed rivals. They did and, by mistake, in a friendly part of town, too.

However, Hekmatyar stands out in a class

of his own. Even as prime minister, he is afraid to enter the capital for fear of revenge for the slaughter his rocketing has caused. Hekmatyar's party was best known inside Afghanistan for fighting other Mujahidin groups, even though it received the greatest portion of the CIA-subsidised funds. He runs training camps for Islamic radicals from Morocco, Egypt, Algeria and Kashmir. As a member of the shadowy Muslim Brotherhood, he has been receiving private and state funds from a variety of unorthodox sources, ranging from the purist Saudi sect of the Wahhabis to Pakistani military intelligence. He backed Saddam Hussein in the Gulf war. For rocketing Kabul, most Afghans I spoke to would rather reward him with the firing squad than the prime ministership.

Hekmatyar's anti-western obsessions are not merely verbal. In 1987, his men murdered Andy Skrypkowiak, a British cameraman, because he was bringing footage of Masood's military victories to the West. These men dropped a large rock on the journalist's head while he was asleep by the wall of a house. Far from punishing the guilty, Hekmatyar rewarded the culprits with Jeeps and continues to lie about the crime. "Did the British government make any representation to you about this case?" I asked him in his camp, south of Kabul. "No, never," he answered. Later, in Islamabad, Sir Nicholas Barrington, Britain's High Commissioner in Pakistan told me that he had "personally told Mr Hekmatyar at length of Her Majesty's government's grave concern over the murder".

The West in general and the United States in particular bear a heavy responsibility for promoting Hekmatyar to his current position of strength. For years, American officials condoned his assassinations, lies and propaganda, despite repeated warnings from journalists and allied governments. What is amazing is not that Hekmatyar turned down a meeting with President Reagan in 1985 — given his political associations, it was a perfect opportunity to snub the Great Satan — but that he was offered a chance for such a meeting in the first place. Powerful men in the American administration favoured Hekmatyar at that

time. Now the damage is done. He lives off the money and weapons which had been supplied to him for fighting the Soviet army and which he had stashed away for this time of struggle for power.

ARGUABLY, THE MAIN western goal in Afghanistan — Soviet defeat — has been achieved and we can treat Afghanistan as the backwater it had been before the Soviets invaded. This is the current policy. Western interest in Afghanistan is best measured in the level of subscriptions to the UN's emergency appeal for Afghanistan last January: only \$23 million was donated, and the secretary general had asked for \$138 million. While the Iranian, Pakistani and Saudi embassies in Kabul buzz with activity, western embassies are shut, even though they are located in a relatively safe part of town. The British embassy has been vacated. Western policy is to wait and see what happens in the hope of being able to work with whatever government emerges in Kabul. What does it matter if a tin-pot country is taken over by a tin-pot dictator?

But Afghanistan is not the same country it was before the war. American satellite images show that a bumper crop of poppies, from 23,470 hectares of fields, can be expected this year — an increase of 4,000 hectares on last year. Afghanistan is fast coming to rival the golden triangle in the Far East as a major source of heroin and, from this perspective, it is clearly in our interest to support the kind of central authority which is likely to tackle the drug menace.

The world has changed in the past 20 years, too. With cheap transatlantic travel and instant communications, terrorists can base themselves anywhere on the globe. A terrorist with a satellite phone, limitless revenue from the poppy fields and access to Iran and turbulent Central Asia might be forgiven for liking a remote Afghan valley rather more than places like the Bekaa valley or Libyan deserts. Afghanistan's potential nuisance value is indicated by a recent terrorist incident. Several months ago, a lone Pathan gunman opened up on employees at the gate of the CIA headquarters at Langley, Virginia. The might of the CIA, FBI and Pakistani army has been mobilised to try to capture him on the Afghan-Pakistani border in Baluchistan. More than 4,000 men were recently used in dawn raids on suspected hideaways. The culprit, however, is still at large.

If Hekmatyar consolidates his power, the West might have a much bigger problem than it bargained for. He is holding Afghanistan to ransom and is, perhaps, on the threshold of victory. If he wins, he will likely turn against his former patrons — Pakistan and the West — in

favour of more radical friends. We may soon find out that, as with Saddam Hussein or Manuel Noriega, western money and western illusions have created a genie who refuses to get back into the bottle. The West should support Masood: it is not too late yet. Afghanistan has always caused trouble for great powers. It could do so again.

On my last day in the city, I visited one of Kabul's famous landmarks, the Babur Shah garden, where the founder of India's Mogul empire is buried under a marble tomb. The gateway into the garden is controlled by the Uzbek militia of General Dostom, the shrine on the hill by Masood's Tajiks, while the low ground with the shell of the Soviet embassy in the distance is patrolled by gangs of armed boys from Hezb-i-Wahdat. Contrary to Babur's wishes, the grave is now shaded by a marble canopy. I started transcribing the famous inscription from a marble panel at the head of the tomb slab, but got no further than: "A ruler from whose brow stone

Light of God . . ."

Suddenly, cries of terror came from a nearby lump of mud houses. A young girl was being carried, piggy-back, by an old peasant, her father. Blood poured out of a wound in her leg. She was in shock, not yet feeling the pain. The mother hovered around, trying to wrap a blanket around her daughter.

They explained what had happened as we rushed downhill, towards where the bullets were coming from, to my waiting car, screened from the fire by a mud wall. They had been chased out of their house two months previously, but that day, the shooting being light, they risked coming back to pick up clothes and blankets. The girl, Paishoon, was lucky; it was only a Kalashnikov bullet. Anything heavier would have taken away her whole leg. She was in hospital only minutes after the shock wore away, and the pain began. There had not been any real fighting; it was just another random shot on a lazy afternoon. ●

SEPTEMBER 25 1993 THE TIMES MAGAZINE

(London)

Much of this article appeared in the National Review, 8/23/93

Mr. Slobodan Mladić, Nato's roving correspondent, wrote about the Afghanistani war in his book *The Death of the Sultan*.



AFGHANISTAN FORUM

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ABBREVIATIONS USED

ACBAR	- Agency Coordinating Bureau for Afghan Relief
ARIC	- ACBAR Resource & Information Centre
BIA	- Bakhtar Information Agency
CSM	- Christian Science Monitor
ICRC	- Int'l Committee of the Red Cross
KT	- Kabul Times
LAT	- Los Angeles Times
MEI	- Middle East Int'l
NGO	- Non-Governmental Organization
NWFP	- Northwest Frontier Province
NYT	- New York Times
OIC	- Organization of Islamic Conference
PCV	- Peace Corps Volunteer
PT	- Pakistan Times
PVO	- Private Voluntary Organization
UNGA	- United Nations General Assembly
UNOCA	- United Nations Office of the Commissioner for Afghanistan
UNOCHA	- United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Relief for Afghanistan
UNHCR	- United Nations High Commission for Refugees
WSJ	- Wall Street Journal
WP	- Washington Post

Line drawings from the 1982 calendar of the Chicago Afghanistan Relief Committee.

Please send items for the AFGHANISTAN FORUM to

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